

**GEORGE WASHINGTON CAMPBELL
OF TENNESSEE.
WESTERN STATESMAN**

By
WEYMOUTH T. JORDAN



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CAMPBELL OF TENNESSEE



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FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY STUDIES
NUMBER SEVENTEEN

**GEORGE WASHINGTON CAMPBELL
OF TENNESSEE
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Tallahassee

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Printed and Bound in the United States of America
by the Florida Grower Press, Tampa, Florida

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY STUDIES

NUMBER SEVENTEEN

The Florida State University

Tallahassee

1955

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY STUDIES

Published under the Auspices

of

The Research Council

The Florida State University

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To

ROBERT S. COTTERILL,
gentleman and scholar

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GEORGE WASHINGTON CAMPBELL
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PREFACE

So much emphasis has been placed upon the work of a few outstanding leaders in public affairs of the United States during the first quarter of the nineteenth century, that historians have sometimes overlooked important services that were rendered by numerous individuals who seldom occupied the center of the political stage. Among such men, the public career of George Washington Campbell of Tennessee may be considered as a fairly typical example. For the most part, biographers of early leaders of the Old Southwest, and of Tennessee after it became a part of the New West, have limited their studies to such colorful figures as John Sevier and Andrew Jackson and the like, seemingly overlooking the fact that less spectacular persons also warrant close attention. Campbell, although much more active and important from a national standpoint than most of his contemporary officeholders from Tennessee and the West (1803-1820), has received little notice. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to put together for the first time a connected account of Campbell's activities and contributions, and to rescue him from almost complete oblivion. Relatively few materials concerning his private life and actions have been located; and for this reason the account does not contain much information of a personal nature. The study has necessarily developed into one that is concerned primarily with the subject's public activities and interests. The book is related to Campbell more than to his times, although an effort has been made to place Campbell in his proper setting. Although a host of scholars have worked long and diligently in the field of American history in the early national period, few people seem to have heard of George Washington Campbell. Thus, to write this biography has been both a challenge and a privilege.

I wish to express my appreciation for their aid and patience to the officials in charge of the following libraries and manuscripts collections: Tennessee State Library and Archives, Tennessee Historical Society, Joint University Libraries, and the

Carnegie Public Library, Nashville, Tennessee; University of Tennessee Library and the Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville, Tennessee; Florida State University Library, Tallahassee, Florida; Alabama Polytechnic Institute Library, Auburn, Alabama; Judson College, Marion, Alabama; North Carolina Historical Commission and the Library of the State of North Carolina, Raleigh, North Carolina; county officials in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, and in Knox and Davidson Counties, Tennessee; and the Library of Congress and the Archives of the Departments of State, Treasury, and Army, Washington. The biography could not have been written without the manuscripts and kindness of Mrs. Susan M. Brown, of Spring Hill, Tennessee, whose husband was a direct descendant of Campbell. Publication of the study has been made possible by the Research Council and the Publications Committee of Florida State University.

Members of the historical guild have furnished both aid and comfort in the preparation of the study from its beginnings. Campbell was first called to my attention by the late Carl Samuel Driver of Vanderbilt University, who during his all-too-short life became a recognized authority in the history of the Old Southwest. In its original form the biography was written (at Vanderbilt University) under the direction of William C. Binkley, now of Tulane University; and I hope sincerely that the printed book, nearly twenty years later, contains some evidences of Professor Binkley's magnificent insight. Frank L. Owsley of the University of Alabama and Daniel M. Robison of the Tennessee State Library and Archives also have made many valuable suggestions. Pertinent and very searching criticisms have been offered by Stanley J. Folmsbee of the University of Tennessee, a leading expert in the field and period with which the study is concerned. Five of my colleagues at Florida State University, Walter Blackstock, Claude A. Campbell, Robert S. Cotterill, Charles S. Davis, and Victor S. Mamatey, have been kind enough to help me overcome some of my pitfalls of writing and interpretations. All of these authorities have given will-

ingly and unselfishly of their time, skill, knowledge, and advice in helping me complete the book. In some respects the printed study is as much theirs as mine, although the interpretations and shortcomings are my own responsibility. My wife has aided me in every possible way through the stages of research, writing and re-writing, just talking about the subject, and the pleasures in writing about Campbell.

Tallahassee, Florida
June, 1954

Weymouth T. Jordan

Chapter I

EARLY LIFE

George Washington Campbell was a product of the North Carolina and Tennessee frontiers. He was never concerned actively with the problem of opening up new regions as a frontiersman, but rather with the equally important task of improving the economic and social conditions in a region which had been shown to be desirable by earlier settlers. He was twice pulled westward by the same forces that attracted so many of his contemporaries, but both times he went west as a townsman rather than as a backwoodsman. For most of his life Knoxville and Nashville, Tennessee, were his legal residences. And it was his fate to become a spokesman of a region, Tennessee, which was one of the first in the West to pass from a frontier stage of development to that of statehood. After demonstrating amply his abilities as a representative in Congress, he went on to several higher political positions; and he became interested primarily in national affairs. In the course of his long public career, of about twenty years, he associated intimately with the social elite of two continents and became one of the most cultured gentlemen in Tennessee and the West. At his death he was probably the wealthiest man in Tennessee.¹

Throughout the first two decades of the nineteenth century, Tennessee was exceptionally fortunate in its selection of men to represent it in Congress. Of these individuals the more prominent were Campbell, William Blount, Andrew Jackson, William C. C. Claiborne, Daniel Smith, Joseph Anderson, John Sevier, John Rhea, and Felix Grundy. Most of this group were Southerners by birth, but none of them were natives of Tennessee. As representatives of their state they were close followers of the Republican party (the Jeffersonian party), before and after election. For the most part they were well educated, and

¹See Weymouth T. Jordan, "The Public Career of George Washington Campbell," East Tennessee Historical Society's *Publications*, X (1938), 3-18, and his "The Private Interests and Activities of George Washington Campbell," *ibid.*, XIII (1941), 47-65.

several of them rose to places of importance in their political party.

Campbell was outstanding during the period when he was particularly active in politics, 1803-1820, and with few exceptions he held more important state and federal positions than any of his contemporaries in Tennessee and the West.² To the present, however, very little has been known of his career. His day was one when few politicians became popular heroes merely through tenure of office. He lived at a time in the development of his state—and of adjoining states—when a premium was placed on military activity. Since he never was an Indian fighter or even a member of any military organization (as far as is known), he failed to captivate public imagination as did two of his contemporaries, John Sevier and Andrew Jackson. It is not at all surprising that a man of Campbell's type, somewhat scholarly and methodical in his ways and habits, has been outshone by these two more colorful and picturesque figures who, like many of their contemporaries beyond the Appalachian Mountains, used their military exploits against the Indians of their region as stepping stones to political office. Campbell utilized the legal profession as a means of gaining public attention and office. He was elected as his state's representative in Congress in 1803. After serving in that capacity for six years, he became, in succession, judge of the Tennessee Supreme Court of Errors and Appeals; United States senator; secretary of the treasury of the United States; senator again; minister from the United States to Russia; and finally a member of the French Spoliation Claims Commission of 1832-1835. While holding these various positions, discussions of which comprise the major portions of this biography, he demonstrated repeatedly that he was more than able to hold his own in the vicissitudes of national politics and diplomacy.

²For pen pictures of some of Tennessee's early politicians, see Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone, eds., *Dictionary of American Biography*, 21 vols. and index (New York, 1928-1945), I, 267-268, IV, 115-116, 255-256, XV, 524-525, XVI, 602-604, XVII, 254-255.

George Campbell was born February 8, 1769, in the parish of Tongue, Sutherlandshire, Scotland, and was the youngest of a family of ten children.³ His father, Archibald Campbell, of an old and noble Scotch family, was a country physician. His mother was Elizabeth Mackay Campbell, formerly the wife of Duncan Matheson who had also lived in Tongue. When George was three years old the Campbell family moved to America, settling in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.⁴ That particular section of the colony had first been settled by Scotch-Irish families who arrived there from western Pennsylvania and Virginia during the early decades of the eighteenth century. Taking up land, along with German families, they had become the most enterprising settlers of western North Carolina. Following the Scotch-Irish and Germans were Englishmen, French Huguenots, and Swiss, the last of these waves coming in by way of Charleston, South Carolina. The region became so thickly settled that Mecklenburg County was erected in 1762.⁵

It is very probable that immediate members of the Campbell family or friends of the family resided in North Carolina and that they or their descendents induced Archibald to follow suit. Dr. Campbell adopted the usual method of making a living in a region such as Mecklenburg County of his time. He became a farmer, and his family worked a small tract of land on a stream known as Crooked Creek,⁶ in the southeastern section of the present city of Charlotte. It may be assumed,

³The children were Alexander, Janet, Katherine, Colin, Donald, Duncan, John, Elizabeth, Anne, and George. Their births are recorded in the Family Bible of the L. M. Brown Family (in possession of Mrs. Susan M. Brown, Spring Hill, Tennessee).

⁴Philip May Hamer, "George Washington Campbell," in Johnson and Malone, eds., *Dictionary of American Biography*, III, 452; George Norbury Mackenzie, *Colonial Families of the United States of America*, 7 vols. (Baltimore, 1911-1920), II, 507.

⁵D. A. Tompkins, *History of Mecklenburg County*, 2 vols. (Charlotte, 1903), I, 15. For an interesting description of the establishment of North Carolina counties, see David Leroy Corbitt, *The Formation of North Carolina Counties, 1663-1943* (Raleigh, 1950). See Hugh T. Lefler and Albert R. Newsome, *North Carolina, The History of a Southern State* (Chapel Hill, 1954), 69-81, for a discussion of the coming of the Scotch-Irish, Scotch, and Germans to western North Carolina.

⁶Family Bible of the L. M. Brown Family.

however, that Dr. Campbell continued to practice his profession, for that was certainly an added source of income—and trained physicians were always both scarce and needed on the American frontier. Moreover, his children were numerous enough and some of them old enough to manage his farm without his constant presence and aid. The little evidence concerning the elder Campbell which is available indicates that he probably gained only an ordinary living.

Unfortunately, very little material is to be found concerning the childhood and formative period of young George. If he lived the typical frontier or quasi-frontier life of such a region as Mecklenburg County during his early years, which presumably was the case, it is likely that he performed chores around his home and accompanied his older brothers on hunting and fishing trips. Without question he was influenced by his surroundings. He was probably impressed with the events of the American Revolution more than any other happenings during his childhood. He was of course too young to participate actively in the war; but, according to family tradition, he did demonstrate where his own sentiments and those of his family lay during the war by adding *Washington* to his name out of respect for General George Washington. Thereafter he was known as George Washington Campbell.

Although many of the backcountry Loyalists (supporters of the British Crown) in the American Revolution were Scotch-Irish, who had not been long in America, also included in the racial group were many of the most ardent revolutionists.⁷ North Carolina was noted for the large number of Loyalists which it was supposed to contain, but there seems to have been no difference of feeling among the immediate members of the Campbell family. George's three older brothers enlisted in the American patriot forces. Alexander, the oldest, was killed in September, 1780, while fighting in the interior of South Carolina. A second brother named Donald, while opposing Colonel Banastre Tarleton at Waxhaw, died from a shot

⁷See Henry Jones Ford, *Scotch-Irish in America* (Princeton, 1915), *passim*, for an excellent account of the Scotch-Irish.

through the head. Colin, the third brother to take part in the war, returned home safely. But in 1782 there was another death in the Campbell family. This time it was the father who, according to his widow, "died at his own house on Crooked Creek, McClenborough County, N. C."⁸ Dr. Campbell did not bequeath much personal property to Mrs. Campbell and her eight children. According to his will, his "lands, Gear & Goods" were left to his widow, and each child was to receive the sum of ten shillings.⁹

George W. Campbell had reached the age of fourteen years when peace was concluded with England in 1783. His family had suffered three deaths during the war, but it had a means of earning a living by operating its farm. Dr. Campbell had been quite well educated, and it is probable that before his death he taught his children to read and write. Elizabeth Campbell also could read and write and for her time seems to have had a fair education.¹⁰ After her husband's death she took over the instruction of her younger children. Tradition has it that she was particularly interested in teaching her youngest child, George, whom she is said to have considered the quickest to learn. George also must have obtained some formal education during his youth, for at the time the section of North Carolina where he lived possessed a comparatively large number of schools.¹¹

In his early twenties Campbell was teaching school, probably in his own county and near his home. At the age of twenty-three, in 1792, following several years of teaching, he entered the junior class of the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University). Like the great majority of the sons

⁸Family Bible of the L. M. Brown Family.

⁹Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, Records, Wills, 1749-1869, IV, 2 (Archives of the North Carolina Historical Commission, Raleigh).

¹⁰Dr. Campbell's will, drawn up by himself on March 8, 1782, contains his and his wife's signatures. Each signature is written in a clear, distinct hand. *Ibid.* G. W. Campbell's handwriting was very similar to his father's.

¹¹For information concerning schools in western North Carolina during the early development of the colony, see W. L. Saunders and Walter Clark, eds., *The Colonial Records of North Carolina*, 30 vols. (Raleigh, 1886-1914), V, 1150, VIII, 749, X, 1012, XIII, 374, 382, XXV, 519.

of Scotch families who had moved into the backcountry regions earlier in the century, he probably selected that particular college because he was a member of the Presbyterian Church. Indeed, the great portion of students then enrolled in the school came from communities very much like Campbell's. Despite having to work for part of his expenses while attending college, Campbell took an active role in student affairs on the campus. Forensics being his particular interest, he became a member of the American Whig Society, a literary and debating organization; and during his last year at Princeton he won the coveted Mathematical Oration medal. He was graduated with high honors in 1794.¹²

Campbell again became a teacher after leaving Princeton, this time at Trenton, New Jersey,¹³ where he must have obtained his position through the efforts of Princeton authorities in recognition of his student record. After one or two years' teaching, during which time he began studying law, he returned to his home in North Carolina, where he continued his legal training. It is not known whether he attended a law school or studied under some practicing lawyer, but since the latter was the more common practice at the time it was probably the way he completed his studies. Within a short time after returning to North Carolina he was admitted to the bar. However, he did not practice law extensively, if at all, in North Carolina.¹⁴ He saw better opportunities elsewhere, and either in 1797 or in 1798 he moved to Knoxville, Tennessee, then a bustling little town of about fifty houses.¹⁵

¹²Bethenia M. Oldham, *Tennessee and Tennesseans* (Clarksville, Tennessee, 1903), 104; Hamer, "George Washington Campbell," *loc. cit.*, III, 452; Alexander Leitch, Secretary of Princeton University, to the author, January 22, 1936.

¹³*Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1927* (Washington, 1928), 781.

¹⁴John Trotwood Moore and Austin P. Foster, *Tennessee, The Volunteer State*, 4 vols. (Nashville, 1923), II, 83; Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, Court Minutes, 1796-1798 (Archives of the North Carolina Historical Commission).

¹⁵Hugh Lawson White to Lyman C. Draper, April 6, 1836, in the Tennessee Papers of the Draper Collection of Manuscripts (photostat copies in the Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville). See also *Goodspeed History of Tennessee*, . . . (Nashville, 1887), 927, and Philip May Hamer, *Tennessee, A History, 1673-1932*, 4 vols. (New York, 1933), II, 777.

Tennessee had attained statehood in 1796; Knoxville was its capital; and in moving there Campbell very likely was impressed, as were very many other settlers during the same period, with the growing importance of the state and town.¹⁶ According to a newcomer to Knoxville in November, 1795: "To a person who observes the emigration to this country, it appears that North and South Carolina and Georgia were emptying themselves into it."¹⁷ Since Campbell had lived in Mecklenburg County, only about two hundred miles from Knoxville, he had no doubt heard accounts of the fast-growing town and decided that it was a promising location for a young lawyer.¹⁸ He was merely following the common practice of his time of moving westward to find a new life in a place which seemed to offer more opportunities for advancement than had his old home. His reason for going to Tennessee seems to have been just that simple.

On March 15, 1798, shortly after arriving in Knoxville, Campbell received a commission from Governor John Sevier to practice law in Tennessee.¹⁹ He began his practice in Knoxville, and rapidly became a leading lawyer in the capital. Within a few years his reputation spread throughout East Tennessee.²⁰ And he moved to Knoxville at an opportune time. The little community was the trading center of the settled sections of East Tennessee, and business was booming.²¹ Few

¹⁶The first settler in the Knoxville area seems to have arrived there in 1775. Samuel Cole Williams, *Dawn of Tennessee Valley and Tennessee History* (Johnson City, Tennessee, 1937), 321, 436.

¹⁷Samuel Cole Williams, ed., *Early Travels in the Tennessee Country* (Johnson City, Tennessee, 1928), 432. According to F. A. Michaux, *Travels to the Westward of the Allegany Mountains* (London, 1805), 89, by the year 1802, Knoxville had approximately 200 houses.

¹⁸For a sketch of developments in Knoxville from 1791 to 1802, see Stanley J. Folmsbee and Lucile Deaderick, "The Founding of Knoxville," East Tennessee Historical Society's *Publications*, XIII (1941), 3-20.

¹⁹See Tennessee Commission Book, April, 1796-June, 1801, p. 16 (Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville), for a record of Campbell's commission. Carl Samuel Driver, *John Sevier, Pioneer of the Old Southwest* (Chapel Hill, 1932), presents an excellent account of early Tennessee history.

²⁰Mark Armstrong to Andrew Jackson, August 19, 1803, in Andrew Jackson Papers (Library of Congress).

²¹For a reference to Tennessee's population in 1795, see Albert C. Holt, *The Economic and Social Beginnings of Tennessee* (Nashville, 1923), 163.

of the people near Knoxville had clear titles to their land, three or four parties claiming the same piece of property in many cases. As Knoxville had some of the leading courts and lawyers in the state, there was continual litigation over land claims; and Campbell got more than his share of cases, since he soon proved himself to be a capable and hard-working lawyer. From his arrival in Knoxville until October, 1801, he was rarely without a client.²² At the later date he sought election to Congress as a representative from Tennessee. The mere fact that he attempted to gain the position indicates that he had acquired a position of some importance. And this fact takes on even more significance when one considers that from its admission to the Union until the congressional elections of 1803, Tennessee was entitled to only one member in the national House of Representatives.

In August, 1801, Tennessee's representative in Congress, the well-known William C. C. Claiborne, was re-elected over his opponent, John Rhea of Sullivan County.²³ During early September of the same year, however, President Thomas Jefferson offered Claiborne the governorship of the Mississippi Territory, which had been established in 1798. Claiborne resigned from Congress, September 22, thus causing Tennessee to have to hold a special election to fill the vacancy created in Congress. A bill providing for the election passed the Tennessee General Assembly; and was announced in the Nashville *Tennessee Gazette* and other state newspapers. This special election, held on October 29 and 30, afforded an opportunity for several young Tennessee lawyers and politicians to seek Claiborne's seat in Congress.²⁴ Among the aspirants was G. W. Campbell, who at

²²Knox County, Tennessee, Court Minutes, 1798-1801 (Office of the County Clerk, Knox County Court House, Knoxville). Thomas Perkins Abernethy, *From Frontier to Plantation in Tennessee* (Chapel Hill, 1932), 44-63, 182-193, describes some of the practices followed by early Tennesseans in taking up land.

²³Claiborne received 7,977 votes to Rhea's 1,261 in the election. *Tennessee House Journal*, 1801, p. 9.

²⁴*Ibid.*, 1801, p. 35; *Tennessee Senate Journal*, 1801, p. 31; Nashville *Tennessee Gazette*, May 13, August 12, October 7, 1801; Claiborne to John Sevier, September 22, 1801, in Archibald Roane Papers, in the Tennessee Historical Society Collection (Tennessee State Library and Archives).

the time was thirty-two years old. Three other rather young men, all of whom later played important roles in Tennessee and national politics, also announced their candidacy. They were John Rhea, who had opposed Claiborne in the regular election; William Dickson, who at the time was Speaker of the Tennessee House of Representatives; and John Cocke of Hawkins County.²⁵

Not a great amount of information is available on the conduct of the campaign; thus the stands taken by the several candidates cannot be determined definitely. Of the candidates, Dickson had the best chance of winning, because of his position in the General Assembly. He had at least attracted some public attention before 1801. Of special importance also was the support which he received from Andrew Jackson, who even at this early date carried much influence in Tennessee, and who on this occasion acted as spokesman of his political faction in the state.²⁶ A week following the announcement of the special election, a letter written by Jackson to Dickson, obviously meant for publication, appeared in the *Nashville Tennessee Gazette*. Jackson described Dickson "as a sincere friend in private life" and one to whom the writer was "very much disposed to extend his little political support."²⁷ This letter undoubtedly helped Dickson win the election. It may be assumed, however, that Campbell and the two other candidates were active in the campaign. Campbell had had extensive experience as a speaker; and he must have made addresses in at least the leading communities of East Tennessee. It may be assumed, too, that all the candidates pledged their support to President Jefferson, for the Virginian was very popular with the

²⁵*Nashville Tennessee Gazette*, October 7, 1801; see also Charles A. Miller, *The Official and Political Manual of the State of Tennessee* (Nashville, 1890), 197.

²⁶See John Spencer Bassett, *The Life of Andrew Jackson*, 2 vols. (New York, 1911), I, 15-36, for a concise and very considered account of Jackson's early career in Tennessee. A. M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Age of Jackson* (New York, 1945), contains a later interpretation of Jackson, but for an appraisal of the latter book, see Bray Hammond, "Public Policy and National Banks," *Journal of Economic History*, VI (May, 1946), 79-84.

²⁷*Nashville Tennessee Gazette*, October 14, 1801.

transmontane people and had easily carried Tennessee's vote in the presidential election of 1800.

Dickson continued to serve in the General Assembly until it adjourned in November, and on December 7 he took his seat in the Seventh Congress.²⁸ Campbell, meanwhile, resumed his law practice in Knoxville; and for the next two years continued as one of the most sought-after lawyers in Tennessee. But he still aspired for public office, again announcing for Congress in 1803.²⁹ This time he had better chances of success, for during the interval between the elections of 1801 and 1803, Tennessee was allotted two more seats in the lower House of Congress as a result of an increase in the population shown in the census of 1800. By August, 1803, when the elections were held, Tennessee had been divided into three administrative districts, but not into congressional districts.³⁰ The 1803 congressional elections, therefore, took the form of a general election with the entire voting population of the state selecting three of the four candidates who ran for office. The three congressional districts as set up in 1803, as well as the counties which were added to the original districts in the period 1803-1812, are shown in the following table. After the districts were established, each of the state's congressmen represented the district in which he resided.

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS IN TENNESSEE, 1803-1812³¹

	Counties	Year Erected
Washington District	Carter	1796
	Greene	1783

²⁸Tennessee *House Journal*, 1801, p. 139; *Annals of Congress*, 7 Cong., 1 Sess. (1801-1802), 309. This later item is cited hereafter as *Annals*.

²⁹Mark Armstrong to Jackson, August 19, 1803, in Jackson Papers; Nashville *Tennessee Gazette and Mero District Advertiser*, August 17, 1803.

³⁰*Acts of Tennessee*, 1803, p. 133. This Act provided: "That, in the future elections for representatives in Congress, the state shall be laid off into three divisions; . . ."

³¹Material for this table was furnished by R. T. Quarles, Recording Secretary of the Tennessee Historical Society. New congressional districts were established in 1812. See Holt, *The Economic and Social Beginnings of Tennessee*, 156, for a map showing the counties of the state in 1806.

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS IN TENNESSEE, 1803-1812—(cont.)

	Counties	Year Erected
Washington District	Hawkins	1786
	Sullivan	1779
	Washington	1777
Mero District	Bedford	1807
	Davidson	1783
	Dickson	1803
	Franklin	1807
	Giles	1809
	Hickman	1807
	Humphreys	1809
	Jackson	1801
	Lincoln	1809
	Maury	1807
	Montgomery	1796
	Overton	1806
	Robertson	1796
	Rutherford	1803
	Stewart	1803
	Smith	1799
	Sumner	1786
	Warren	1807
	White	1806
	Williamson	1799
	Wilson	1799
Hamilton District	Anderson	1801
	Blount	1795
	Bledsoe	1807
	Campbell	1806
	Claiborne	1801
	Cocke	1797
	Grainger	1796
	Jefferson	1792
	Knox	1792
	Rhea	1807
	Roane	1801
	Sevier	1794

Dickson, Rhea and Cocke, the three candidates whom Campbell opposed in the congressional election of 1801, again sought office in 1803. In the latter campaign Campbell supported ex-Governor Sevier for election over the incumbent, Archibald Roane,³² in the gubernatorial contest which accompanied the general election of congressmen, and he gained some votes because of the position he took on this issue. Once more the candidates pledged, if elected, to champion the policies of President Jefferson. Campbell also retained the support of some of the voters who had backed him for office in 1801, and his exceptional speaking abilities—at a time when public speaking brought unusual pleasure to voters—must have influenced many people to vote for him.³³ Available returns of the election do not indicate the number of votes the candidates received in each county. Campbell's total, however, was only 167 votes less than Dickson's, who had the advantage of a term in Congress. This result is at least indicative of Campbell's popularity. He also received more votes than any of the candidates except Dickson. He received 9,515 votes, Dickson 9,682, Rhea 7,382, and Cocke 5,511. In the gubernatorial election Sevier defeated Roane by a vote of 6,780 to 4,723. On October 17 the three congressmen took their seats in the Eighth Congress.³⁴

³²Roane polled 8,438 votes for the governorship in 1801, and was unopposed for election. *Tennessee Senate Journal*, 1801, p. 9.

³³Nashville *Tennessee Gazette and Mero District Advertiser*, August 17, 1803. De Alva Stanwood Alexander, *History and Procedure of the House of Representatives* (Boston, 1916), 301, mentions that Campbell was a very able speaker.

³⁴*Tennessee Senate Journal*, 1803, pp. 12-13; *Annals*, 8 Cong., 1 Sess. (1803-1804), 368. It will be remembered that each voter cast a vote for a gubernatorial candidate, as well as votes for three of the four candidates in the congressional election.

Chapter II

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE WEST

Throughout his career in Congress, Campbell supported legislation sponsored by the Jeffersonian party. But he never forgot his constituency, and at all times he was aware of the problems and the desires of the people living in his state and section of the West. Four days after entering the House of Representatives he demonstrated this attitude when a special message requesting an appropriation to execute the Louisiana treaty was received from President Jefferson.¹ Strong objections were offered to the treaty by certain Federalist representatives, but Campbell and the other Westerners offered none. On October 23, 1803, he voted in the affirmative when \$11,250,000 was appropriated for carrying out the treaty.² On this same day, Campbell wrote Andrew Jackson that Congress had been busily engaged "on the subject of *Louisiana business*." Tennessee, he said, could expect many advantages because of its proximity to the new territory: "... The *Western States* are naturally interested in having immediate possession taken of that country—doubts are suggested here of the constitutionality of our admitting that country into the Union as a State—and many appear opposed to admitting it to be populated, etc.—These objections are likely to become more serious than at first might be deemed—. . . ." Campbell was sure that the Federalists in Congress would attempt to block legislation concerning the new territory, and that extended debates would take place before the question was settled. He, nevertheless, would support the interests of the western states in the matter and

¹Paul Leicester Ford, ed., *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, 10 vols. (New York, 1892-1899), VIII, 274.

²*Annals*, 8 Cong., 1 Sess. (1803-1804), 382. For an account of the actions of Congress on the treaty and legislation concerning Louisiana, see Everett Somerville Brown, *The Constitutional History of the Louisiana Purchase, 1803-1812* (Berkeley, California, 1920); in this connection, J. A. Robertson, *Louisiana under the Rule of Spain, France and the United States, 1785-1807*, 2 vols. (Cleveland, 1911), is also very useful.

believed that other Westerners in Congress would follow the same course.³

The immediate question to come before Congress for discussion after the Louisiana treaty was accepted and money set aside for its execution was the newly acquired region's relation to the federal government. This indeed proved a problem for debate, since the territory did not come definitely under the provisions laid down in the famous Ordinances of 1785 and 1787. The Senate appointed a committee, December 5, headed by Senator John Breckinridge of Kentucky, to report on a proposed government in Louisiana.⁴ Breckinridge soon recommended a bill which bears his name. The measure as finally passed in the Senate on February 18, 1804, after a month and a half of debate, divided the purchase into two parts: that south of the thirty-third parallel to be known as the Territory of Orleans; that north of the same parallel to be designated as the District of Indiana. As provided by this bill, the people living in the Territory of Orleans were to have no part in determining governmental policies in the normal sense. All officials, including a Legislative Council of thirteen members, were to be appointed by the President of the United States or by the Territorial governor. The right of trial by jury was granted only in cases involving capital crimes. Importation of slaves from abroad was prohibited.⁵

When the bill was received in the lower House on February 24, it was immediately attacked both by Federalists and by members representing the western states. Disapproval was widespread, and by no means confined to members who usually opposed the Administration. Those representatives from the western states, all Jeffersonians, who opposed the

³Campbell to Jackson, October 29, 1803, in Jackson Papers. Arthur Preston Whitaker, *The Mississippi Question, 1795-1803* (New York, 1934), contains an excellent discussion of the importance of the Mississippi River to Tennesseans and to the residents of the other states which the River borders.

⁴*Annals*, 8 Cong., 1 Sess. (1803-1804), 211.

⁵*Ibid.*, 233. *Ibid.*, Appendix, 1293-1300, contains the full text of the Breckinridge bill, as approved by Jefferson on March 26, 1804. For a survey of Breckinridge's career, see Lowell H. Harrison, "John Breckinridge: Western Statesman," *Journal of Southern History*, XVIII (May, 1952), 137-151.

bill stated that it would establish an unwanted and autocratic government in the new territory, and that it did not follow the precepts outlined by the Ordinance of 1787. Michael Lieb and Andrew Gregg, two anti-administration representatives from Pennsylvania, objected to the Breckinridge proposal on the ground that it conferred "royal powers" upon President Jefferson.⁶ Campbell entered the debate on February 28, at that time making his first speech in Congress. His address was quite lengthy, showed much preparation, and was delivered in the stilted style followed by many of his contemporaries. He was extremely bitter in his denunciation of the bill, particularly of the form of government proposed for the Orleans Territory.

Although Campbell was an avowed follower of Jefferson, who approved the Breckinridge measure, his speech indicates that he was willing to abandon party lines whenever he believed that a proposed bill was detrimental to the interests of the people of the West: "On examining the section [of the bill concerning self-government in the Territory] it will appear that it really establishes a complete despotism; that it does not evince a single trait of liberty; that it does not confer one single right to which they [the new citizens] are entitled under the treaty; that it does not extend to them the benefits of the Federal Constitution or declare when here after, they shall receive them." Campbell added, "I believe it will, on investigation, be found difficult to separate liberty from the right of self-government, and hence arises the question, now to be decided, whether we will countenance the principle of government by despotic systems of government, or support the principle that they are entitled to be governed by laws made by themselves, and to expect that they shall, in due time, receive all the benefits of citizens of the United States under the Constitution." This was a speech typical of a Westerner. Campbell favored a territorial government modeled after that which existed in the Territory of Missis-

⁶See *Annals*, 8 Cong., 1 Sess. (1803-1804), 977-1062, for a record of these very partisan speeches.

issippi, under which citizens of the Territory, to a large extent, determined their own form of government. His conclusion was that the sooner the people in the Orleans Territory gained self-government the better.⁷

Discussion of the Breckinridge bill occupied much of the House's time for the next few weeks.⁸ That section of the bill providing for enactment of laws in the Orleans Territory by the appointive Legislative Council was struck out by a vote of 80 to 15. Campbell voted with the majority on this question; he also offered a substitute for the section stricken from the original bill, suggesting instead that the governor and judges of the Territory adopt such laws of the existing states as were suitable for the exigencies of the situation. The governor and judges, he said, should be allowed to enact necessary laws, but before adoption those laws ought to be approved by Congress, and they should remain in effect only until a Territorial General Assembly was established. At the latter time a complete set of laws should be enacted by the representative group. The Territory ought to be divided into counties for purposes of administration. The General Assembly, when organized, should consist of a Legislative Council and a House of Representatives. No property qualifications ought to be required of the voters in the Territory.⁹ These suggestions, which again point up the fact that Campbell was indeed a Westerner in his attitudes toward government, show that the speaker was definitely interested in and had made an elaborate study of the Breckinridge bill, but they seemingly were wasted when the House refused to accept any of them.

Campbell was also a leading critic of that section of the bill concerning judicial procedure in the Territory. He disapproved of the section because it failed to provide for jury trial in cases other than those involving capital crimes, and

⁷*Ibid.*, 1063-1067, contains Campbell's complete speech.

⁸For references to Breckinridge's part in the Senate adoption of his bill, see Harrison, "John Breckinridge: Western Statesman," *loc. cit.*, 146-147.

⁹*Annals*, 8 Cong., 1 Sess. (1803-1804), 1078-1079.

suggested that all trials be by jury in all civil cases above the value of twenty dollars. Here he was obviously merely following Amendment VII of the United States Constitution. He was also of the opinion that Congress did not have a constitutional right to establish courts in any Territory any different from those in the states; for, according to him, "Whenever courts were established in the Territory, they must be considered courts of the United States." But these suggestions, offered in the form of an amendment to the bill, also were not accepted. It would seem, therefore, that by this time Campbell would have lost heart, but he was still obstinate in his opposition to the measure, and later offered still another amendment, which provided for the election of a Legislature in the Territory in lieu of a Legislative Council appointed by the President. Once more his amendment failed, and following this last attempt to change the bill, he took no further part in the discussion over it in the House.¹⁰ His attacks throughout had arisen from a desire to establish a democratic government in a region near his home, and a region which was faced with the same problems that had been encountered in Tennessee in 1792-1796.

Debate on the Breckinridge bill continued in the lower House until March 17, 1804, at which time the bill was returned to the Senate with two important amendments. First, that section of the original proposal which had invested legislative powers in a Council appointed by the President, and which had been opposed so strongly by Campbell, was struck out. In its place, a compromise was suggested under which the Council was to operate for only one year; after that time the Council was to be replaced by an elective assembly. Second, as a result of the general opposition to the bill, its provisions were limited to two years. Campbell's criticism of the original bill undoubtedly had some effect in bringing about these two amendments, although he by no means should be considered wholly responsible for them. The changes in the bill made by the House led to a conference committee, in

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 1129-1130.

which the Senate refused to accept the amendments. A later conference agreed, however, that all provisions of the measure should be limited to one year. This final compromise was accepted by both Houses, and, on March 26, the measure was signed by President Jefferson. Some of the die-hard House members refused to vote on the final passage of the bill, and the final vote of 51 to 42 indicates a noticeable decrease from votes previously cast on various sections of the measure. Campbell, along with about twenty other members, was among those absent when the bill was passed.¹¹

Another matter of a regional nature with which the new representative from Tennessee concerned himself was construction of a post road from Knoxville to New Orleans.¹² Not long after entering Congress, he was placed on a House Committee to inquire into conditions of the federal postal service. A road bill, which he presented December 4, 1804, provided for a road to begin in Knoxville and connect that town with Jellico, Tennessee; from the latter place it was to proceed to a settlement known as Hickory Ground, in the Creek Nation near the junction of the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers; from there to Fort St. Stephens on the Tombigbee River; and thence to New Orleans. The road, according to Campbell, had three objectives: It would insure a direct route for the transportation of the mail from Knoxville to New Orleans; it would open intermediate points to communication with other sections of the country, and this was especially desired for the settlements around the Tombigbee; and it would improve

¹¹*Ibid.*, 1199, 1206, 1208, 1229, 1300. In a letter to Albert Gallatin, Secretary of the Treasury, written on November 3, 1803, Jefferson outlined what he considered to be a suitable government for Louisiana. Thomas Jefferson Papers (Library of Congress.) The Breckinridge bill conformed to the President's wishes. For an account of Senate action on the bill, see Everett S. Brown, ed., "The Senate Debate on the Breckinridge Bill for the Government of Louisiana, 1804," *American Historical Review*, XXII (January, 1917), 340-364.

¹²Holt, *The Economic and Social Beginnings of Tennessee*, 86-92, contains some brief references to the postal system in Tennessee at this time.

commercial contacts of the areas traversed with other regions of the United States.¹³

As no debate or House action occurred when Campbell introduced his road bill, he again brought up the subject for discussion on February 6, 1805. Once more he was the only member to speak on the subject, but expressed himself precisely as might be expected of a Westerner. He reiterated his earlier reasons for support of such a road, adding that under the existing system of roads in his region the mail was "... carried by a circuitous route from Knoxville to Nashville, two hundred miles, and thence to Natchez, at least five hundred miles, and thence to New Orleans, three hundred miles; . . .," a total of about one thousand miles. He observed, erroneously, that the new road would cut the distance to be covered in half. As to other advantages to be expected from the road, he said, "The only mode by which the people of that country [which the road would traverse] can, at this time, convey their produce to the market, is by boating it down the river Tennessee into the Ohio, then along that [river] to the Mississippi, and down that river to New Orleans." In behalf of his road bill, Campbell stated also that, "The country through which the road from Knoxville will pass, is . . . a fine open country, generally dry without being broken by mountains, a very few streams of any considerable size to be crossed, and no large rivers until you arrive at the Tombigbee. It will pass along the high lands that lie between the waters falling into the Tennessee River, and those that are discharged into the Coosa and Alabama Rivers, and will require little expense" ¹⁴ But Congress was in no mood to accept Campbell's bill just at this time.¹⁵

¹³*Annals*, 8 Cong., 2 Sess. (1804-1805), 680, 1185-1189. The community of Jellico, mentioned by Campbell in his speech, is not to be confused with present-day Jellico, Tennessee. See Stanley J. Folmsbee, *Sectionalism and Internal Improvements in Tennessee, 1796-1845* (Knoxville, 1939), for a discussion of the political aspects of the development of transportation facilities during the early history of Tennessee.

¹⁴*Annals*, 8 Cong., 2 Sess. (1804-1805), 1186-1188.

¹⁵As Campbell wrote to Jackson: "... — very little business of real importance has been transacted in the Session, referred to Committees — . . . and of course when the reports are made there will be too little or no time to discuss them —." Campbell to Jackson, January 17, 1805, in Jackson Papers.

The members were too much interested in the impeachment trial of Samuel Chase of the Supreme Court. Congress was in a furor. Campbell was given leave to bring his proposal before the House at some later date.¹⁶

Campbell made no further efforts while in the Eighth Congress to debate any matters of a strictly local nature. Leaving the capital in March, 1805, he returned to Knoxville; and shortly after his arrival home he reported on his stay in Washington to his constituency in the form of a *Circular Letter to the Citizens of Tennessee*, which was published in the leading newspapers of the state and in pamphlet form for distribution. The *Circular Letter* was also a bid for re-election to the next Congress. Campbell in later life prided himself on never having sought a public office,¹⁷ but after reading his *Circular Letter* one must conclude that he was campaigning. Otherwise he would not have informed the voters of Tennessee that he was willing to stand on his record as a supporter of the Jeffersonian party and as a representative working for their welfare.

His report began: "There have been but few subjects of national importance brought before Congress during the present session; and of those very few have been passed into laws." A government had been established in Louisiana, and citizens living along the Mississippi River could expect great advantages from American possession of the new Territory. Tennessee at last had an assured outlet for its products, and no foreign power could rightfully question American control of navigation of the river. Moreover, he remarked, assurance had come from President Jefferson that a treaty would shortly be drawn up between the United States Government and the Cherokee and Creek Indians for the purpose of extinguishing their claims to land within Tennessee. Campbell stated also that he had tried to secure construction of a post road between Knoxville, the Tombigbee settlements,

¹⁶*Annals*, 8 Cong., 2 Sess. (1804-1805), 1183. See Chapter III, below, for the part that Campbell, himself, played in the Chase trial.

¹⁷Campbell Brown to Anson Nelson, February 22, 1882, in Tennessee Historical Society Collection.

and New Orleans. His efforts in this connection had failed, "... but we expect to make such arrangements . . . on the subject, as will insure its ultimate success in a short time" ¹⁸ This reference to the future indicates that Campbell was indeed hoping for re-election.

Tennessee's congressmen were elected by voters in districts for the first time in the elections of August, 1805, for as provided by the Act of the General Assembly, passed November 1, 1803, the state was divided into three congressional districts, Hamilton and Washington in East Tennessee and Mero in Middle Tennessee. West Tennessee of course had not yet been opened to settlement. The Hamilton district, in which Campbell resided and which he represented while in the lower house of Congress, included the following counties in 1805: Anderson, Blount, Claiborne, Cocke, Grainger, Jefferson, Knox, Roane, and Sevier. ¹⁹

As Campbell was not opposed for office in 1805, it was unnecessary for him to carry on an active campaign. He was, however, by this time a close political and personal friend of Andrew Jackson, and aligned himself with the political group in Tennessee with which Jackson was associated. This of course meant that Campbell shifted his support from Governor Sevier to the latter's opponent, Roane, in the gubernatorial election of the same year. Campbell realized that he could not retain the friendship and political backing of Jackson if he supported Sevier, whom Jackson opposed. Campbell, therefore, deliberately attached himself to Jackson, the rising star of Tennessee, and remained a supporter of Jackson for the rest of his life. Sevier was the past, Jackson was the future. To Campbell, it was politic to shift his support from Sevier to Roane. Even so, he realized that Roane had little chance of defeating Sevier. From Knoxville he wrote to

¹⁸Nashville *Tennessee Gazette and Mero District Advertiser*, April 10, 1805. See Robert S. Cotterill, *The Old South* (Glendale, California, 1936), 107-127, for references to a treaty made with the Cherokee Indians in October, 1805, which included provision for construction of a road similar to the one proposed by Campbell. A road into the region was not constructed immediately after 1805, however.

¹⁹See the Table on page 22.

Jackson, July 18, 1805, " . . . We have not anything here very interesting with regard to elections—very little activity on the subject—and it is thought not much change in the minds of the people—except in a few settlements—where it is said the former executive [Roane] has gained ground."²⁰ That this was a correct prediction is shown by the fact that the old Indian fighter defeated Roane by the overwhelming vote of 10,733 to 5,909.²¹

Although Campbell had no opposition in the Hamilton district, the official returns of the 1805 election are of interest, particularly as they indicate his popularity. The following table has been compiled from the written reports of the election made to the Secretary of State by the sheriffs of the counties in the district:²²

OFFICIAL RETURNS OF THE GUBERNATORIAL AND
CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS IN THE HAMILTON DISTRICT,
TENNESSEE, AUGUST 2, 1805

Counties	Candidates		
	Campbell	Sevier	Roane
Anderson	1,902	(total vote in the three counties)	
Knox			
Roane			
Claiborne	266	(Total vote in the two counties)	
Cocke			
Sevier	595		
Blount	768	545	228
Jefferson	621	487	140
Grainger	1,058	1,118	132
Total	5,210	2,150	502

²⁰Campbell to Jackson, July 18, 1805, in Jackson Papers.

²¹Tennessee *Senate Journal*, 1805, p. 13.

²²Material for this table is located in the Tennessee Secretary of State Historical Records (Tennessee State Library and Archives).

Some, but only some, of the returns on the votes for Sevier and Roane are included in the above table; and a comparison of those returns with Campbell's also indicates the latter's support. In the same election the voters selected two other congressmen: William Dickson and John Rhea, who had served along with Campbell in the previous Congress. Rhea was elected in the Washington district with a vote of 4,130, Dickson in the Mero district with 6,006.²³

On December 19, 1805, soon after the Ninth Congress convened, Campbell resumed his activities in behalf of Tennessee by proposing: "That a committee be appointed to inquire whether any, and if any, what alterations are necessary to be made to the act to regulate trade and intercourse with the Indian tribes and to preserve peace on the frontiers; and that the committee have leave to report thereon by bill, or otherwise."²⁴ This resolution, which probably resulted from contacts which Campbell had had back home, was approved by the House, and Campbell was appointed chairman of the committee for which it provided. Immediately afterwards, he became involved in other congressional matters, and if he reported a bill it is unknown. However, President Jefferson did approve a bill, in April, 1806, increasing the number of Indian trading-houses throughout the United States;²⁵ and it may be that since Campbell was serving on his committee to handle such matters he was partially responsible for the bill.

Another problem of interest to Tennesseans with which Campbell concerned himself at this time was the ownership of territory located along the coast of Florida east of the Mississippi River. An ambiguous arrangement had been made under the Louisiana treaty, and the territory in question was claimed by both the United States and Spain. Clashes occurred involving Americans, Spaniards, renegades, runaway slaves and Indians in the disputed area, especially along the Florida-Georgia border. Certain Americans, including Presi-

²³*Tennessee Senate Journal*, 1805, p. 13.

²⁴*Annals*, 9 Cong., 1 Sess. (1805-1806), 297-298.

²⁵*Ibid.*, 1287-1290.

dent Jefferson and other inveterate expansionists, eagerly desired the region; and on December 3, 1805, Jefferson, in his annual message to Congress, called attention to what he considered to be a very trying situation. The problem had become so perplexing that war was believed to be imminent.²⁶ Following discussions in the House, a committee of five members was appointed, January 14, 1806, to bring in a bill providing for the purchase of the disputed region. Campbell was named a member of the committee, probably because of the interest he had shown earlier in the Breckinridge bill. In fact, Westerners were interested in West Florida for the same general reasons they were interested in the Territory of Orleans. On the day after its appointment, the committee presented a bill in favor of purchasing West Florida; and on the same day an appropriation for the purchase was granted.²⁷ Campbell's part in all this is unknown. However, most of the votes against the bill were those of the representatives from the Middle and New England states, who feared that their sections would not benefit from the purchase and that the West's population someday would outnumber their own. Throughout the votes cast on the bill, Campbell and other Westerners supported it. But as is well known, the United States did not gain Florida at this time.²⁸ Campbell, as will be seen, did not lose interest in Florida, and he continued, at least intermittently, to work for acquisition of the region for the next fifteen years. In this activity, he was typical of the leaders of the Old Southwest of his day.

In early March, 1806, Campbell brought before the House a matter which was of even more special concern to the people of his state. He had received a resolution from the

²⁶James D. Richardson, ed., *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1897*, 10 vols. (Washington, 1899), I, 332-333. See also Louis Houck, *The Boundaries of the Louisiana Purchase* (St. Louis, 1901); Hubert Bruce Fuller, *The Purchase of Florida, Its History and Diplomacy* (Cleveland, 1906); and Rembert W. Patrick, *Florida Fiasco, Rampant Rebels on the Georgia-Florida Border, 1810-1815* (Athens, Georgia, 1954), 22-28.

²⁷*Annals*, 9 Cong., 1 Sess. (1805-1806), 1127-1133.

²⁸See Isaac Joslin Cox, *The West Florida Controversy, 1798-1813*, . . . (Baltimore, 1918).

Tennessee General Assembly requesting “. . . that provision ought to be made for opening and improving the navigation of the river Tennessee, through the Muscle Shoals, in the Mississippi Territory . . . ,”²⁹ which then included present-day Mississippi and Alabama. For commercial purposes the merchants and people of East Tennessee desired to open up the region and to use better the Tennessee River, and they wanted the federal government to pay the bill. Campbell was keenly aware of this fact, and a few days after receiving the resolution he presented it to the House. The members were not interested in the subject at the time, however, and they referred it to a committee headed by Campbell. There the matter remained, and no definite action was taken on it, just as in the case of many other resolutions on the same subject. The problem has been like the poor: it has generally been with Tennessee.³⁰

On April 19, two days before the recess between the First and Second sessions of the Ninth Congress, Campbell presented to his colleagues still another subject of importance to his state. This time it concerned the Tennessee Indians. The General Assembly had sent him another resolution, which he was to forward to President Jefferson. The following letter, written by Campbell and his Tennessee colleagues in Congress to accompany the resolution, is self-explanatory: “At present there are very few houses of accommodation on the road from Nashville to Natchez—nor can these be established without the assent of the Indians—with you alone rests the power of obtaining their assent—The traveling on this road is very great, [and] of course the sufferings of our fellow citizens who have much communications with Natchez and Orleans

²⁹*Annals*, 9 Cong., 1 Sess. (1805-1806), 575. For an interesting discussion of the practice of state legislatures memorializing, “instructing,” and “requesting” members of Congress to take action on specific questions, see Clement Eaton, “Southern Senators and the Right of Instruction, 1789-1860,” *Journal of Southern History*, XVIII (August, 1952), 303-319.

³⁰*Annals*, 9 Cong., 1 Sess. (1805-1806), 575. Donald Davidson, *The Tennessee: The Old River-Frontier to Secession* (New York, 1946), and Gilbert E. Govan and James W. Livingood, *The Chattanooga Country, 1540-1951* (New York, 1952), contain hundreds of references to the importance of the Tennessee River in Tennessee's history.

must be in proportion—We are induced to hope with confidence the success of our application—from your uniform attention to their wants—and patronage of the interests, of our western citizens—for which we take this occasion to express— our sincere gratitude.”³¹ This letter was written by Campbell and signed by himself, Representative Rhea, and Senator Joseph Anderson; and although no immediate result came from it, the plea does indicate that Campbell was active in looking after the interests of the people of his state and region. The letter also shows that Campbell did not hesitate to remind Jefferson that Westerners were followers of the President’s party and should receive consideration because of that fact.

During the second session of the Ninth Congress, Campbell interested himself in two important matters which may be considered regional in nature. The first was brought on by the Aaron Burr conspiracy, Campbell proposing that the President be empowered to accept state militia for army service, under army regulations, when they offered their services in time of danger. Such a power should be granted to the President, he said, because it would put in his hands “a disposable force, which might be called out at a moment’s notice, whenever the exigency of affairs might require it.”³² However, Campbell’s suggestion was criticized by Representative Joseph Varnum of Massachusetts, a powerful and polished speaker who, having the acts of Aaron Burr and his associates in mind, intimated that frontier troops might prove disloyal to the United States when called into service. Campbell’s rejoinder to what he considered a slap at himself and his region was caustic: “If there were conspirators against the peace of the country,” he said, “you will find the body of them . . . composed of men who have hitherto resided in the old parts of the Confederacy. You will find few or none of them on the frontiers; and so far as I am acquainted with the people of this country [and here he expressed an

³¹Campbell, John Rhea, and Joseph Anderson to Jefferson, April 19, 1806, in Jefferson Papers.

³²*Annals*, 9 Cong., 2 Sess. (1806-1807), 205.

opinion similar to Jefferson's], I believe there is no part of them more attracted to the Government and the Union than the Americans on the frontier settlements,"³³ This speech is of special import for several reasons. It shows that Campbell was quite able to take care of himself in the rough-and-tumble debate in which Congressmen so often become involved, of which there was an excessive amount between Jeffersonians and anti-Jeffersonians during the years Campbell was in Congress. Campbell's flashing speech indicates pointedly that he was ready to defend the West. Finally, it may be taken as an example of the bitter feeling which sometimes flamed forth between the East and West. As for the outcome of Campbell's resolution, it was referred to a select committee empowered to return a bill carrying out its provisions.

Campbell's next activity of a regional nature occurred in January and February of 1807. A Senate bill establishing a new judicial district in Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio was received in the lower House and referred to a special committee headed by Campbell. On February 2 the Tennessean reported favorably on it, and it was shortly thereafter approved in the House.³⁴ One section of the bill provided for an additional justice of the United States Supreme Court to ride the circuit in the new district set up by the bill. Immediately after the measure was adopted, a House caucus consisting of representatives from Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio met to name its choice of a person to fill the new position; and among those considered were Campbell and several Kentuckians, including James Hughes, Thomas Todd, and John Boyle. The caucus selected Campbell as its choice and recommended him to Jefferson. Since his nomination conflicted with the provision of the Constitution which prevents a member of Congress from serving in an office created while he is in that body, however, Jefferson refused to accept the

³³*Ibid.*, 214-215.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 426, 433, 486, 500.

caucus' recommendation.³⁵ The following letter written by John Randolph of Roanoke, Virginia, to his friend, Joseph Nicholson of Maryland, furnishes another interesting viewpoint of the incident:

Bad as you suppose matters to be, they are even worse than you apprehend. What think you of that Prince of Prigs & Puppies, G. W. C. [Campbell] for a Judge of the Supreme Court of the United States !!! . . . You must know that we have made a new Circuit consisting of the three Western States, with an additional Associate Justice. A caucus (excuse the slang of politics) was held, as I am informed, by the delegations of those states for the purpose of recommending some character to the President. Boyle was talked of, but the interest of C. [Campbell] finally prevailed. This is 'Tom, Dick and Harry' with a vengeance. But, to cap the climax, an attempt was made by the honorable aspirant himself so to amend the bill as to get around the constitutional barrier to his appointment. Can you conceive a more miserable or shameless prevarication than the following? An office is created, but the Act made to take effect after the 3rd of March; therefore, say those unblushing quibblers, not being created during the time for which they were elected, but coming into existence subsequently, we are eligible! The proposed amendment was, however, rejected, although strenuously pressed in the House as well as in the Committee.³⁶

If the contents of this letter are correct, as they may well be, they supply a significant insight into the character of Campbell, a man who claimed that he never sought an office. However, an examination of the discussions of the bill as recorded in the *Annals of Congress* shows only that "after some time" the measure passed its third reading. Campbell's part in the affair is not recorded. Amendments were made; a House-Senate conference was held, indicating the existence of a very definite difference of opinion on the question; but again Campbell's role in the debate and passage of the bill can not be determined on the basis of available information. It is known, however, that he voted in the affirmative when the bill was accepted.³⁷ Perhaps Campbell was one of the

³⁵Charles Warren, *The Supreme Court in United States History*, 3 vols. (Boston, 1913), I, 299-300.

³⁶Randolph to Nicholson, February 17, 1807, in Joseph H. Nicholson Papers (Library of Congress).

³⁷See *Annals*, 9 Cong., 2 Sess. (1806-1807), 50, for the vote on the bill, which passed 32 to 7. The following materials have been checked to verify Randolph's version of Campbell's role in the passage of the bill, but they throw no light

"Prigs & Puppies" of his day. As a final settlement of the appointment to the new judgeship, on February 28, 1807, Jefferson named Thomas Todd, a lawyer of Kentucky who had been prominently mentioned in the caucus of the western representatives, to the position.³⁸ Regardless of Campbell's part in the whole affair, that he was first chosen as the favorite by the caucus of his colleagues from Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio is indicative of his growing importance and popularity. In early 1807 he was certainly no longer unknown as a Westerner in Congress.

In August, 1807, Campbell was again a candidate for election to Congress; but, as usual, there is a scarcity of available material on the election, and little other than the result can be mentioned. The *Impartial Review*, a Nashville newspaper, is the only Tennessee newspaper published in 1807 that has been located. It does not, however, contain any information in regard to the congressional election of 1807. No private letters of real value have been found which throw any light on the subject. The *Tennessee Senate Journal* and *House Journal* for the year 1807 also contain no material of value on the subject, other than the statement that the state's three representatives had been elected. Even returns for the election have not been located. It is known at least that Campbell was re-elected in the Hamilton district without opposition. John Rhea was returned to Congress from the Washington district; William Dickson was not up for re-election, his place in Congress being taken by a newcomer to national politics, Jesse Wharton; and Sevier was elected to his third successive term as governor.³⁹

on the subject: William Plumer Autobiography, 1795-1844 (Library of Congress); Charles Francis Adams, ed., *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, Comprising Portions of His Diary from 1795 to 1848*, 12 vols. (Philadelphia, 1876); *Annals*; George Washington Campbell Papers (one collection in the Library of Congress, the other in possession of Mrs. Susan M. Brown, Spring Hill, Tennessee); and numerous other manuscripts collections and general works of history. The matter is mentioned in Warren, *The Supreme Court in United States History*, I, 300-301, and in Henry Adams, *John Randolph* (Boston, 1898), 210, but these two books add nothing to the version presented here.

³⁸Warren, *The Supreme Court in United States History*, I, 301.

³⁹Tennessee Commission Book, May, 1807-October, 1815, p. 15 (Tennessee State Library and Archives).

While in the Tenth Congress Campbell was named chairman of the most important committee in the House of Representatives, that of Ways and Means, thus attaining a position and honor which comes to relatively few Congressmen. The greater part of his time was now given to legislation of national and party significance rather than to local matters.⁴⁰ While he was serving as chairman of Ways and Means, most questions of special concern to Tennesseans were introduced in the House by his fellow representative, John Rhea, who had also been in Congress for four years. Upon occasion, however, Campbell did press matters of particular interest to his constituents;⁴¹ and as a congressional leader his suggestions along this line naturally received more attention than previously. During 1807-1809 Campbell was not a very active spokesman on behalf of the peculiar interests of Tennesseans, although he exerted influence by his mere presence and new position of importance as well as by his reputation as a Westerner. At least one of his endeavors in regard to Tennessee in this period should be mentioned, however.

On November 12, 1807, Campbell once more brought up the question of improving the navigability of the Muscle Shoals, this time presenting to the House a *Memorial* that he had received from settlers living near the Shoals. The *Memorial*, a very interesting expression of Western sentiment, indicated emphatically that Tennessee merchants suffered in their transportation of goods down the river because of the expensive and time-consuming portages which had to be made around the Shoals. It was hoped that the federal government would appropriate money to alleviate this condition. The *Memorial* also requested that trading posts and roads be established around the headwaters of the Tombigbee River for the benefit of settlers in that region.⁴² Campbell was thus again pressing for several bills or problems in which he had been interested previously. The House, after listening to the

⁴⁰See Chapters III and IV, below, for references to Campbell's activities as chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee.

⁴¹For example, see *Annals*, 10 Cong., 2 Sess. (1808-1809), 1041-1536, *passim*.

⁴²*Wilson's Knoxville Gazette*, February 10, 1808.

Memorial, referred it to a committee headed by Campbell who, because of pressure of other business, failed to report a bill on the subject. But he did not forget the *Memorial*. In February, 1808, he wrote the Secretary of War, Henry Dearborn, requesting information of the War Department as to how the wishes of the memorialists could best be carried out.⁴³ Dearborn's answer was that before any action could be taken it would first be necessary to obtain cessions of land from the Cherokee and Choctaw Indians living near the Tennessee and Tombigbee Rivers. Department of War agents, he said, were just then investigating the problem and attempting to negotiate a treaty with the Indians. New information on the subject would be forwarded to Campbell as it became available;⁴⁴ and here the matter was allowed to rest temporarily. As will be seen, Campbell, like many Western congressmen of his time, was to become intimately involved in settling Indian claims to land in his state. Indeed, it is, perhaps, for this very reason that he should be particularly remembered as a working spokesman of his region.

Upon his return to Knoxville in the spring of 1809, Campbell announced that because of ill health he would not seek re-election.⁴⁵ For the next eight months he held no public office, but in November he accepted the position as judge of the newly created Tennessee Supreme Court of Errors and Appeals. After serving in that capacity until October, 1811, he was selected by unanimous vote of the General Assembly as United States senator to fill out the unexpired term of Jenkins Whitesides, who had resigned.⁴⁶ Campbell's private correspondence during his term on the Court indicates

⁴³Campbell to Dearborn, February 17, 1808, in Adjutant General's Office, Old Records Division, Letters Received, 1808 (Archives of the Department of War). Cited hereafter as A. G. O., O. R. D. These records, as well as several others utilized in this study, have been transferred to the United States Archives since they were examined by the writer; consequently the writer retains in his footnotes and bibliography the locations of the records as of the time when he examined them.

⁴⁴Dearborn to Campbell, February 22, 1808, in A. G. O., O. R. D.

⁴⁵*Wilson's Knoxville Gazette*, April 15, 1809.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, September 23, October 7, 1811; Nashville *Democratic Clarion and Tennessee Gazette*, October 1, 8, 1811.

emphatically, and even longingly, that his chief interest lay in Washington. This, plus the fact that the position of senator was high in the political scale, was the reason for his eagerness to return to Washington.

While in the Senate, between 1811 and 1818 (minus part of the years 1814 and 1815),⁴⁷ Campbell was again active in promoting the welfare of Tennessee. He continued to show great interest in the problem of public lands; and while in the Senate he was particularly eager to open to settlement the so-called Congressional Reservation in Tennessee, which included that part of the state located west of the Tennessee River as well as a wide adjacent strip east of the river in the south-central section of the state.⁴⁸ In February, 1812, for example, Campbell reported to the governor of Tennessee that he was seeking to settle Indian claims in the Reservation:

. . . the Executive has been consulted and . . . assurances were in return given by the proper Department [the War Department] that due attention will continue to be paid [to our interests]. . . . It is believed the Government is well disposed to promote our wishes, . . . But it must be admitted, that owing to the critical crisis in our public affairs, and the more than usual mass of important business of a general nature which at this moment necessarily occupies the national counsels, the present is not the most favorable time to claim successfully their attention, to objects however important of a local nature—

It is however intended to embrace some more favourable occasion when the pressure of public business of a general nature shall have become less urgent, which it is hoped may be the case during the present session, to bring the business again, in a more formal manner, before proper government authorities.⁴⁹

In his hope that the subject of Tennessee lands could be solved soon, Campbell was to be disappointed. A war with England was expected; preparation for the struggle demanded nearly all the attention of Congress and of Campbell himself; and war was declared in June, 1812. Little time, therefore, was available for much consideration of local matters. Nevertheless, on March 27, Campbell again asked the Senate to

⁴⁷From February 12, 1814, until September 27, 1814, Campbell was Secretary of the Treasury in President James Madison's cabinet.

⁴⁸*American State Papers, Lands*, I, 584-585.

⁴⁹Campbell to Willie Blount, February 24, 1812, in Harriet Turner Deposit (Library of Congress).

appoint a committee to bring in a bill making final settlement of Tennessee land grants in the Congressional Reservation. His resolution was accepted and he was appointed chairman of a committee to study the matter,⁵⁰ but it was not until late in the year 1815, after the conclusion of the War of 1812, that Campbell was again able to concentrate on the Tennessee land question. Meanwhile he served a short time as Secretary of the Treasury under President James Madison, resigned from that position, and after a year in private life was elected to a full term in the national Senate.⁵¹ It was after his return to Washington, in December, 1815, that he played his major role in untangling the complicated problem of Indian claims to certain lands in Tennessee.

On December 16, 1815, Campbell and his colleague in the Senate, John Williams, were appointed by Governor Joseph McMinn of their state as agents to negotiate a land treaty with the Cherokee Indians of East Tennessee.⁵² McMinn had learned that a deputation of Cherokee chiefs was planning to visit Washington, and as Campbell and Williams were on the ground, they were instructed to act as special agents in any conversations which might take place on the question of Cherokee lands located in their state. The governor had also received information that the Cherokee were interested in selling their lands "below the mouth of the Highwassey on the mouth of the Tennessee River," a tract of approximately 1,000,000 acres. The tribe, on the other hand, had expressed an unwillingness to dispose of any other lands, and desired especially to retain the Hiwassee District, consisting of about 2,250,000 acres lying between the Hiwassee and Little Tennessee Rivers. The governor also wrote that unless the chiefs who came to Washington were empowered to sell all their land in

⁵⁰*Annals*, 12 Cong., 1 Sess. (1811-1812), 181-182. Abernethy, *From Frontier to Plantation in Tennessee*, 182-193, contains in part a discussion of this problem of the Congressional Reservation.

⁵¹*Tennessee Senate Journal*, 1815, pp. 96-97.

⁵²McMinn succeeded Blount as governor in 1815 and served until 1821. For numerous references to McMinn's interests in Indian affairs, see Robert S. Cotterill, *The Southern Indians, The Story of the Civilized Tribes before Removal* (Norman, Oklahoma, 1954).

Tennessee, Campbell and Williams were to sign no treaty. The state wanted all or nothing from the Cherokee.⁵³

The chiefs arrived in Washington early in 1816, but after brief negotiations with them, it was learned that they had no authority to dispose of any of their lands in Tennessee. Campbell and Williams, thoroughly disappointed at this turn of events, put the matter in the hands of the Secretary of War, William H. Crawford, requesting him to ascertain if in the future the Cherokee would be willing to part with any of their lands. During the negotiations which followed between the War Department and the chiefs, Crawford offered to pay the Indians a perpetual annuity of \$6,000 for their holdings lying south of the Tennessee River and an annuity of the same amount for their lands north of the river. But these offers were rejected flatly. The only concession the chiefs would make was an offer to negotiate over "several reserves in the settled parts of Tennessee."⁵⁴

On learning of the position taken by the chiefs, Campbell and the other Tennesseans in Congress addressed a forceful petition to President Madison, in which they complained not only against the Cherokee for what was considered their stubbornness, but also against the Chickasaw Indians. The petition protested that the whole western part of Tennessee, from the Mississippi to the Tennessee River, and the southern part from the Tennessee to the Elk River, in all about 8,000,000 acres, were claimed by the Chickasaw. The southeastern area of the state, from the settlements in the central section to the Tennessee River, about 4,000,000 acres, was claimed by the Cherokee. Thus, according to the petition, Indian tribes considered approximately one-half of the state's territory as their own. Repeated efforts had been made to settle the claims, but without success. Tennessee had not pushed the matter during the late war with England, but now that peace was restored

⁵³McMinn to Campbell and Williams, December 16, 1815, in "McMinn Correspondence on the Subject of Indian Treaties in the Years 1815, 1816, and 1817," *The American Historical Magazine*, VIII (July, 1903), 377-379.

⁵⁴Crawford to Campbell and Williams, April 4, 1814, in *ibid.*, 330.

the President ought to initiate treaties which would take over the Indian lands in the state.⁵⁵ The day after this petition was sent to Madison, Campbell and Williams reported to Governor McMinn that they had been unable to arrange a treaty with the Cherokee; it was hoped, however, that their negotiations would lead to a speedy settlement of the question.⁵⁶

One of the probable results of the Tennesseans' petition to President Madison was a request of the War Department that the Chickasaw send chiefs to Washington on September 1, 1816, for the purpose of discussing the claims of that tribe to land in Tennessee. But before the date of the meeting, it was learned that both the Chickasaw and the Cherokee were claiming the same land in the state "west of a line drawn due south from that point of the Tennessee river intersected by the eastern boundary of Madison County."⁵⁷ This sort of situation, when more than one tribe claimed the same land, played directly into the hands of land-hungry white men; and Secretary of War Crawford requested Return J. Meigs, federal agent to the Cherokee, to bring representatives of the Cherokee to Washington for a joint meeting with the Chickasaw on September 1. Crawford informed Meigs that unless the Indians' conflicting claims to land in Tennessee could be settled, the United States would take it over "and . . . give them a liberal price for the lands in dispute between them."⁵⁸ As Crawford probably expected, each tribe refused to give up its claims during their September meeting; and the land in question was taken over by the federal government, with the two tribes receiving land west of the Mississippi River in return.⁵⁹

⁵⁵Campbell to Madison, April 17, 1816, in *Miscellaneous Correspondence, Indian Agents* (United States Indian Office Archives). This letter was written by Campbell.

⁵⁶Campbell and Williams to McMinn, April 18, 1816, in "McMinn Correspondence on the Subject of Indian Treaties . . .," *loc. cit.*, 379-380.

⁵⁷Crawford to Return J. Meigs, June 24, 1816, in *Miscellaneous Correspondence, Indian Agents*. Meigs is one of the persons emphasized in Cotterill, *The Southern Indians*.

⁵⁸Crawford to Return J. Meigs, June 24, 1816, in *Miscellaneous Correspondence, Indian Agents*.

⁵⁹Jackson to Campbell, December 22, 1816, in A. G. O., O. R. D.; Nashville *Whig and Tennessee Advertiser*, July 31, 1819.

The land in Tennessee which had been claimed by the Indians was now in the possession of the United States.

Campbell's hope now was that Tennessee would immediately benefit from the settlement made by Crawford, but in this hope he was to be disappointed. The ceded land was located in the Congressional Reservation which, under an Act of Congress of 1806, was reserved for federal government use. Therefore, Tennessee, in its own right, still could not legally open the land to settlers. In the interval between 1806 and the Indian cession of 1816, numerous settlers, nevertheless, had been squatting on the land in the Reservation. Senator Campbell now concentrated on gaining governmental permission for those squatters to remain on their lands, and eventually he was successful in his efforts. His first step was to introduce to the Senate a bill, on January 8, 1817, providing that Tennessee be given authority to issue grants to land in the western part of the state. The next day the bill was referred to the Committee on Public Lands, from which it was finally reported and passed on February 28. The bill was sent to the lower House, where it was referred to Committee of the Whole, but it failed to pass before Congress adjourned on March 3.⁶⁰ The simple fact is that the bill was lost in the usual legislative jam which occurs so often at the close of sessions of Congress.

In the meantime, Campbell presented the case of the Reservation squatters to the Department of War. On January 9, just after introducing his land bill in the Senate, he sent a *Memorial*, containing more than three hundred signatures of Tennesseans, to the War Department, with the request that the document be forwarded to President Madison. The memorialists of course asked that they be allowed to remain on their land. Campbell also informed the Secretary of War that he had just introduced a bill in the Senate which would carry out the wishes of the memorialists, but he did not know how Congress would react to his measure, although he hoped that the President would approve it. If his law were passed, he

⁶⁰*Annals*, 14 Cong., 2 Sess. (1816-1817), 55, 57, 188, 1043-1044.

said, Tennessee could issue grants to the land in question; and no preliminary action by President Madison would be necessary.⁶¹ The day after forwarding the *Memorial* to the War Department, Campbell received a letter from General Andrew Jackson, describing the deplorable condition into which the settlers would fall should they be ejected from the territory that they were occupying.⁶² He forwarded this letter to the Secretary of War, and made another plea of his own in behalf of the squatters. His letter was a magnificent expression of a Westerner's attitude toward an age-old frontier situation:

... The numbers who have moved to that tract of country already with their stocks are from information believed to be correct—immense—To throw them back upon the sparse population of the frontier counties of Tennessee where crops have been but indifferent, would produce distress almost beyond description—not to mention the inveterate hostility it would incite in that quarter against the government, & all those concerned in the measure—It is true these people have no legal right to settle on those lands They have however gone there urged by an enterprising spirit, the very same that peopled almost the whole United States, to improve their situation—They set up no claim to the soil—Their great object at present is the first crop—consisting of cane, grain for their stocks, &—to explore the lands in order to be enabled to purchase to advantage when they are brought into market. These are it is presumed fair objects— Their settling on those lands, & exploring them, will undoubtedly occasion them to sell higher, when brought into market than they would otherwise do. There is no reasonable ground for supposing they will attempt to form any combinations to interrupt, or prevent persons from bidding at the sales of those lands—and should any abandoned individual—or individuals attempt such a measure, it would be put down at once by the responsible, the orderly & well disposed, who will always be sufficiently numerous to preserve an entire control on those occasions—What valuable purpose then may it be asked, can be answered by removing those people from the lands in question, & plunging into distress many thousand citizens, who certainly have committed no wilful crime . . . ?⁶³

Despite all his efforts to settle land claims in his state, Campbell had to return home empty-handed on this score when Congress adjourned on March 3, 1817. But he was back in Washington in December, more determined than ever to bring about a final solution of a problem with which he

⁶¹Campbell to George Graham, January 9, 1817, in A. G. O., O. R. D.

⁶²Jackson to Campbell, December 22, 1816, in *ibid.*

⁶³Campbell to Graham, January 11, 1817, in *ibid.* A copy of this letter is also included in the Campbell Papers (Library of Congress).

had been wrestling off and on since the year 1803. Success was short and sweet. His main interest again was in opening up the lands in the Congressional Reservation for the satisfaction of military grants, some of which had been issued as early as the year 1780; and on December 23, 1817, he introduced a resolution to that effect in the Senate. Once more the resolution was approved and referred to a select committee headed by Campbell.⁶⁴ A short time later Campbell informed the editor of the Nashville *Clarion & Tennessee Gazette* that he was busy writing a bill to permit holders or purchasers of North Carolina military warrants to take up land in the Congressional Reservation, and that "no endeavor would be spared" to bring the measure to a "favorable issue."⁶⁵ At last he read his bill to the Senate on March 20; and six days later, without debate, the bill was approved by both houses of Congress. Thus, after many years of persistent efforts, Campbell managed to open a vast region to the people of Tennessee and other states, and to appease in part the insatiable desire for land which characterized himself and his contemporaries.⁶⁶

Immediately after the passage of his bill, Campbell wrote gleefully of his success to the editor of the Nashville *Clarion & Tennessee Gazette*. On April 21, the newspaper carried a long and glowing account of the advantages Tennessee could expect from the bill which Campbell had put through Congress. Entries would raise much revenue from the land, "which heretofore being public property no tax was derived from it;" and it was predicted that land east of the Congressional Reservation line would also "bring thousands of dollars into the treasury," since that land also now belonged to the state. The Chickasaw Indians still claimed portions of the newly opened area, but, according to the editor, should a treaty be made with them, "an immense extent of country

⁶⁴*Annals*, 15 Cong., 1 Sess. (1817-1818), 293, 1568.

⁶⁵Campbell to Editor, January 13, 1818, in Nashville *Clarion & Tennessee Gazette*, February 3, 1818.

⁶⁶See Gerald M. Capers, Jr., *The Biography of a River Town, Memphis: Its Heroic Age* (Chapel Hill, 1939), 22-33, 75-76; and Cotterill, *The Southern Indians*, 154-155.

will be opened.”⁶⁷ And indeed, later in the year, a treaty was signed with the Chickasaw by which they gave up their lands in the Reservation.⁶⁸

On May 5, 1818, the *Clarion & Tennessee Gazette* published a notice that Senator Campbell had been appointed as minister of the United States in Russia. The editor was of the opinion: “Go where he may, he has the good wishes of many of his fellow-citizens here. He has been long a zealous and faithful public servant, and has rendered many very important services, and last though not least, has effected an object of the first importance to the people he represented.”⁶⁹ This “object of first importance” was, of course, the land law which Campbell sponsored through Congress. For his law he gained the respect and thanks of politicians, of the many speculators who became active as a result of opportunities afforded in Middle and West Tennessee, and of squatters and other settlers. The interest of education in the state had also been greatly enhanced by the benefits of the law. Campbell, too, derived certain personal benefits, when later he acquired large land holdings in the Congressional Reservation. More immediately, in May, while in Nashville preparing for his journey to Russia, he was publicly recognized as the originator of the congressional act from which Tennessee expected a great many benefits. In appreciation of his services and in honor of the new position to which he had been appointed, a dinner was given him in Nashville on May 26, upon which occasion he received the following tribute, “This day a dinner is given him by the citizens of Nashville, and tomorrow he starts for the city of Washington. To his agency is ascribed the passage of a law of the last Congress, appro-

⁶⁷Nashville *Clarion & Tennessee Gazette*, April 21, 1818.

⁶⁸See Abernethy, *From Frontier to Plantation in Tennessee*, 251-252; and Samuel Cole Williams, *Beginnings of West Tennessee, in the Land of the Chickasaws, 1541-1841* (Johnson City, Tennessee, 1930), 84-93. For a map showing the various Indian cessions of land in Tennessee, from 1770 to 1835, see Holt, *The Economic and Social Beginnings of Tennessee*, 37.

⁶⁹Nashville *Clarion & Tennessee Gazette*, May 5, 1818.

priating the lands in the western district to satisfy the unlocated warrants of N. C. & as a means of testifying the public approval of his conduct as a faithful servant, a subscription dinner is given, by those who best know him as a citizen and a public agent.”⁷⁰

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, May 26, 1818.

Chapter III

THE STERLING REPUBLICAN

Not the least significant evidence that Campbell was a staunch Republican was the support that he gave to Jefferson in the President's well-known fight with the federal judiciary.¹ This struggle had started before Campbell arrived in Washington, of course, and it was definitely placed in the hands of Congress on March 3, 1803, when the House of Representatives brought impeachment charges against Judge John Pickering of New Hampshire. The judge was charged with having neglected his duties for several years. However, no further action was taken against the judge until January 2, 1804, when Campbell and ten other House members were appointed by the Speaker, Nathaniel Macon of North Carolina, to prosecute the trial in the Senate. Suffice it to say that proceedings were concluded in March, 1804, and Pickering was removed from office. For the most part the prosecution was carried on by John Randolph, who was chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee at the time. Campbell took no active part in the trial.²

The Pickering trial was actually merely a preliminary step to the impeachment proceedings against Samuel Chase of the United States Supreme Court, and of an effort to lessen the power and prestige of the Supreme Court itself.³ Chase was an old-line Federalist, who, for political reasons, was almost as obnoxious to the members of the Republican party as John Marshall, chief justice of the Supreme Court and one

¹On July 4, 1808, Campbell attended a Fourth of July celebration in Knoxville, at which time he was toasted as "G. W. Campbell — The sterling Republican." *Wilson's Knoxville Gazette*, July 6, 1808.

²*Annals*, 7 Cong., 2 Sess. (1802-1803), 267; *ibid.*, 8 Cong., 1 Sess. (1803-1804), 315-367, 759.

³For references to Chase's activities in enforcing the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798, which Jefferson opposed, and to the Justice's partisanship, see Charles Grove Haines, *The Role of the Supreme Court in American Government and Politics, 1789-1835* (Berkeley, California, 1944), 160, 162, 260, 176-177; and James Morton Smith, "Sedition in the Old Dominion: James T. Callender and *The Prospect Before Us*," *Journal of Southern History*, XX (May, 1954), 157-182. See also William O. Lynch, *Fifty Years of Party Warfare, 1789-1837* (Indianapolis, 1931), 169-176.

of the arch-enemies of the Jefferson group. On one occasion, while conducting a case in Baltimore, Chase vented his political views as follows: "The independence of the national judiciary is already shaken to its foundation, and the virtue of the people alone can restore it Our republican Constitution will sink [soon] into a mobocracy,— The modern doctrines of our late reformers [members of the Republican party] . . . have brought this misfortune upon us; and I fear that it will rapidly progress until peace and order, freedom and property shall be destroyed."⁴ Although no immediate action was taken by the Republican party against Chase, this remark and his other actions could not be overlooked. Therefore, on January 5, 1804, three days after managers were appointed to conduct the Pickering trial, the matter of Chase's conduct and attitudes was brought before the House by John Randolph, who at this time was a follower of Jefferson. Representative Randolph asked for Chase's impeachment.⁵

Several of the less impulsive Republican House members, including Campbell, argued that they did not think sufficient evidence existed to warrant proceedings of such a serious nature against Chase. The young representative from Tennessee said, moreover, that the House acted only as a grand jury in such cases; it was not the business of the House to gather evidence, as had been requested by Randolph, but only to demand that existing evidence be brought before the House for examination. This much, Campbell said, he was willing to do; but he showed his cautiousness by remarking: ". . . I am against the adoption of a measure which may throw censure on a character invested by the United States with high authority, until I am convinced we have sufficient ground for doing so It is not my wish to decide on the propriety of the conduct of the judge until the facts are before us."⁶ His opposition to hasty action had little effect on the Republican

⁴*Annals*, 8 Cong., 2 Sess. (1804-1805), 673-676.

⁵*Ibid.*, 805. See W. C. Bruce, *John Randolph of Roanoke, 1773-1833*, 2 vols. (New York, 1922), for a discussion of the fantastic Randolph.

⁶*Annals*, 8 Cong., 1 Sess. (1803-1804), 816-817.

House members, however, and on January 7, by a party vote of 81 to 40, Campbell not voting, a committee was appointed to investigate Chase's conduct. The committee performed its task, and on March 4, Randolph rendered a scathing and very partisan report on the judge's actions, demanding again that he be impeached. Several days later, by a vote of 73 to 32, this time with Campbell approving and with not one Republican disapproving, Randolph's report was accepted by the House. Randolph appeared in the Senate on March 13, the day following Pickering's removal from office, and announced that charges of impeachment would be brought against Chase as soon as possible.⁷

Shortly after the second session of the Eighth Congress convened, seven managers from the House were selected to conduct the Chase trial in the Senate. Campbell was one of the managers, despite the fact that he had not yet gained a position of importance either in the House or in his political party. In the balloting for managers, he received only a plurality in the vote. The six other managers received clear majorities, but by a special ruling by Speaker Macon, Campbell was declared elected. This small vote received by Campbell may probably be considered as an indication that the Administration forces in the House looked with some distaste on his speech of January 5, in which he had stated that he was opposed to taking drastic actions against Chase until the facts were in.⁸

The Chase trial is one of the best known incidents in American history; therefore, no need exists to review it fully. Even so, Campbell's role in the trial needs to be emphasized, that is, at least mentioned. The trial was finally opened in the Senate on January 2, 1805, but was postponed at the

⁷*Ibid.*, 272, 875, 876, 1180, 1181. The committee which investigated Chase consisted of Randolph, Joseph H. Nicholson of Maryland, Joseph Clay of Pennsylvania, Peter Early of Georgia, Roger Griswold of Connecticut, Benjamin Huger of South Carolina, and John Boyle of Kentucky.

⁸*Ibid.*, 8 Cong., 2 Sess. (1804-1805), 762. The managers were Randolph, Campbell, Nicholson, Early, Boyle, Caesar Rodney of Delaware, and Roger Nelson of Maryland. See also Edward Channing, *The Jeffersonian System, 1801-1811* (New York, 1906), 120-122.

request of Chase, who asked for more time to prepare his defense. The House forced the accused to stand trial on February 4, however, and on that date the proceedings began. Suffice it to say that Chase had as his counsel several of the leading lawyers of the day, while the prosecutors were either of inferior ability or haphazard in their conduct of the trial. The House managers were not consistent in their arguments, and none of them, including Campbell, proved themselves to be outstanding prosecutors. All of them went into political harangues and spilled partisan invectives against the defendant, but they had little effect on the outcome of the trial. On March 1, when judgment was passed by the Senate, only nineteen votes were recorded in favor of removing Chase from office.⁹

Campbell's part in the trial was especially mediocre. On February 20, he spoke against Chase; and his argument shows that he had accepted his party's line of attack, although he did insist, along with most of his colleagues, that impeachment was more of a civil than a criminal investigation.¹⁰ If the testimony of William Plumer, the crotchety Federalist senator from New Hampshire who was present throughout the trial, can be accepted, Campbell was decidedly not at his best on the occasion. Plumer's account of the Tennessean's speech of February 20 is anything but complimentary: "George Washington Campbell was a representative from Tennessee. He was a lawyer, but not eminent in his profession. His dress & manner were those of a gentleman. He had made much preparation for a long argument, but was so much embarrassed and confused, that on the day in which he commenced his speech, after drinking much water & attempting in vain to proceed, he requested as a favor, the Senate to postpone the trial to [the] next day, which was

⁹*Annals*, 8 Cong., 2 Sess. (1804-1805), 29, 668; Haines, *The Role of the Supreme Court in American Government and Politics*, 261-264; Roger Foster, *Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States* (Boston, 1895), 535-537; Nathan Schachner, *Thomas Jefferson, A Biography*, 2 vols. (New York, 1951), II, 774-780.

¹⁰*Annals*, 8 Cong., 2 Sess. (1804-1805), 329-344.

granted.”¹¹ According to John Quincy Adams, who was then United States senator from Massachusetts, Campbell spoke for one hour and a half, and “. . . as he found himself indisposed . . .,” requested a short interval of rest. Returning a half-hour later, he stated that he was unable to finish his speech; and as none of his fellow-managers were prepared to speak that day, the Senate adjourned.¹²

Next day Campbell resumed his speech, emphasizing that it was not necessary to prove Chase guilty of any crime known to law, but adding that he laid “it down as a settled rule of decision that when a man violates or commits a manifest breach of his duty, an evil intent or corrupt motive must be presumed to have actuated his conduct.”¹³ On the basis of such reasoning, which of course fitted in with the intent of the Republican party, Campbell concluded that Chase should be convicted and removed from office. To rely again on John Quincy Adams for an account of Campbell’s second speech, his last one of the trial, he spoke with such fervor that he exhausted himself and again had to cease speaking before completing his remarks.¹⁴ If such were the case, his whole part in the trial was ignoble. To say the least, Campbell’s role in the Chase trial was not one of the high spots in his career.

The case for the defense was opened by an accomplished speaker, Joseph Hopkinson, of Pennsylvania.¹⁵ He and his colleagues who followed him concentrated for the most part on trying to force the prosecutors to remain within the law in their arguments. In this way they embarrassed the prosecutors repeatedly. They showed without question that numerous technical errors were made by the House managers in their conduct of the trial; that as a group the Jeffersonians

¹¹William Plumer Autobiography, 14.

¹²Adams, ed., *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, I, 355.

¹³See *Annals*, 8 Cong., 2 Sess. (1804-1805), 344-353, for Campbell’s second speech.

¹⁴Adams, ed., *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, I, 356.

¹⁵The speeches of the defense counsel are printed in *Annals*, 8 Cong., 2 Sess. (1804-1805), 394-541, 542, 559.

were not consistent in their speeches; and that Chase was not guilty of any crime known to law, the latter fact even being admitted by Campbell, one of the prosecutors. Chase's acquittal took a rather peculiar turn, that is, Randolph lost much face with the members of his party because of the way he had directed the prosecution. In fact, it was partially because of Randolph's failure to convict Chase that he lost the leadership of his party in the House. There were many other reasons, of course. In an effort to salvage something from the fiasco, however, Randolph returned to the House on the day Chase was acquitted, and proposed an amendment to the United States Constitution providing for the removal of Supreme Court justices on a joint resolution of Congress. Perhaps the proposal would have been adopted if it had been made before the Chase trial; but afterwards it was too late, and Randolph's suggestion was referred to the next session of Congress.¹⁶ During the remainder of Jefferson's time as President, suggestions of the same sort were made time after time, but nothing definite ever came of them.

Campbell himself became involved in at least one of the efforts to change the procedure of impeaching judges, in the course of his association with the case of the *United States v. Burr*. In the fall of 1806 the Administration was of the opinion that Aaron Burr, former vice-president under Jefferson, was attempting to bring on a war between the United States and Spain or that the New Yorker was perhaps trying to set up an independent government in the West. On January 16, 1807, Randolph requested Jefferson to lay all available information on the subject before the House for its consideration. Campbell and several other members of the House believed, however, that action should not be taken too hastily on the matter. Campbell, for example, claimed that the newspapers of the country were playing up Burr's activities to an extent greater than was warranted by events, and he was not yet ready to brand the former statesman a traitor. He favored a

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 1213. See Lynch, *Fifty Years of Party Warfare*, 176-178; and Ralph V. Harlow, *The History of Legislative Methods in the Period before 1825* (New Haven, 1917), 170-172, 178-179.

cautious procedure and wished more information on Burr's activities, and believed that the Administration should not proceed against Burr until all the facts were at hand. Thus, although he differed somewhat in his approach to the subject, Campbell favored Randolph's resolution and supported it when it was passed by the House.¹⁷

Campbell took no active part in the trial of Burr and the latter's associates, but he showed a rather absorbing interest in the question of the use of the *habeas corpus* in the whole affair. In December, 1806, General James Wilkinson of the United States Army arrested two of Burr's associates, and refused them the right of the writ of *habeas corpus*.¹⁸ The two men were then conducted to Washington for trial. On February 7, 1807, a resolution was introduced in the House stating that some further provision ought to be made for securing the use of the writ by persons in custody of the United States; and on February 18 Representative James Elliot of Vermont made a fervent speech in its favor. He was answered by Campbell, who maintained that "The State sovereignties ought to be preserved inviolate, and should not be encroached upon by this House legislating on subjects that properly belong to the state authorities."¹⁹ Furthermore, he said, the whole Burr affair, out of which had grown the discussion over the *habeas corpus*, would arouse even more public opinion if Elliott continued to declaim on the matter. Campbell also argued that the state laws had made excellent provisions for upholding the writ in all cases, and he knew of no defects in the systems prevailing on the states. In conclusion, he blasted Representative Elliot: "he trusted in God that the Constitution did not depend on the effervescence of an enthusiastic imagination, discharging without argument its ebullitions in such a style as was often heard in the House;

¹⁷*Annals*, 9 Cong., 2 Sess. (1806-1807), 336, 347, 357, 358, 379; Haines, *The Supreme Court in American Government and Politics*, 279-287. Thomas Perkins Abernethy, *The Burr Conspiracy* (New York, 1954), traces the conspiracy from its inception to Burr's trial in 1807.

¹⁸Jefferson agreed to this refusal of the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus*. *Annals*, 9 Cong., 2 Sess. (1806-1807), 379.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 546.

... " He himself would "never come forward as the champion of the Constitution and laws merely to declaim and make a noise."²⁰

Elliot tore into Campbell the next day: "From the extreme difficulty with which the gentleman managed his metaphor, it was obvious to us all that he was no great proficient in the art. And yet he is unquestionably the very best painter of the school to which he happens to belong [the Republican party]. There is more animation in his figures, there is more grace in his coloring than are to be found in the best productions of his associate artists."²¹ Following this diatribe, consideration of the resolution under discussion was postponed to an indefinite date.²² Meanwhile, another factor entered into the question of the use of the *habeas corpus*, namely: the decision of the United States Supreme Court that it possessed the power to issue the writ. On February 18, the Court began trial of two of Burr's associates on the charge of treason. The story of their trial and Burr's is well known: they were indicted, tried, and acquitted.²³

The outcome was considered by Jeffersonians as another deliberate attack on the Administration; and for more than six months after the trial was concluded on September 3, 1807, Republican newspapers charged that Federalist judges had aided "traitors" to escape "just punishment."²⁴ On January 30, 1808, Campbell added his bit to the attack, when he made a speech in the House which is so nearly in keeping with his political outlook as a Republican, that it is quoted in its entirety:

²⁰*Ibid.*, 553.

²¹*Ibid.*, 578.

²²*Ibid.*, 590.

²³An excellent contemporary account of the Burr trial is to be found in David Robertson, *Reports of the Trial of Colonel Aaron Burr* (Philadelphia, 1808). See also James W. Silver, *Edmund Pendleton Gaines: Frontier General* (Baton Rouge, 1949).

²⁴Warren, *The Supreme Court in United States History*, I, 302-315. For one of Jefferson's statements about the affair, see Bernard Mayo, ed., *Jefferson Himself, The Personal Narrative of a Many-Sided American* (New York, 1942), 264-267.

It has always been my opinion that in a free Government like ours, every department ought to be responsible for its conduct. The Constitution of the United States was evidently framed on this principle, and the preservation and security of the rights and liberties of the citizens and the due execution of the laws will be found to rest, in a great degree, on rendering public agents sufficiently and practicably responsible for their conduct to the nation. That this is not the case has been proved by experience. Your judges once appointed are independent of the Executive, the Legislature, and the people, and may be said to hold their office for life. They are removable only by impeachment of high crimes and misdemeanors, and this mode of proceeding has been found in practice totally inefficient, and not to answer the purpose for which it was intended—that of rendering your judges responsible for their conduct. They may therefore be considered as independent of the rest of the nation (and they seem to think so themselves,) as if this provision in the Constitution, relative to impeachment did not exist. No matter how erroneous their opinions—how dangerous to the public weal—how subversive of the interests of the people—how directly opposed to the laws of your country; yet, as it is neither a high crime or misdemeanor to hold erroneous opinions, which they seem conscientiously to believe, they cannot be removed by impeachment—they are independent of the rest of the nation.²⁵

Campbell remarked, furthermore, that several state legislatures, including Tennessee's, had recently passed resolutions favoring an amendment to the Federal Constitution rendering justices responsible for their actions. He offered the following amendment to the Constitution: "... That, ... the Judges of both the Supreme and the Superior Courts of the United States, shall, after the _____ day of _____, be removed from office by the President of the United States, on the joint address of both Houses of Congress requesting the same, three-fifths of each House concurring in such address."²⁶ The proposed amendment was referred to Committee of the Whole for action; but similar to other previous suggestions of the same type, which had been offered intermittently since the year 1804, it was never brought up for discussion.²⁷ Campbell showed no further interest in the matter. He had spoken his piece; he was a "sterling Republican."

Campbell was also especially notable for the support that he gave to the Jeffersonian party on the questions of non-

²⁵*Annals*, 10 Cong., 1 Sess. (1807-1808), 1525.

²⁶*Ibid.*; Herman V. Ames, *Proposed Amendments to the Constitution of the United States during the First Century of its History* (Washington, 1897), 322.

²⁷See *Annals*, 9 Cong., 1 Sess. (1805-1806), *passim*.

importation, the embargo, and military preparation. During his first term in Congress he developed an avid interest in foreign affairs, an interest which he maintained for many years. As has been mentioned in another connection, he published a *Circular Letter to the Citizens of Tennessee* in April, 1805, shortly after his return to Knoxville from the Eighth Congress. In reporting to his followers on foreign affairs, he wrote that the government was on friendly terms "... with all nations on earth, the petty state of Tripoli alone excepted . . .," and although that state had not been brought to terms concerning its attack on American shipping, "well founded hopes are entertained that so soon as the season will permit, our force in that quarter, which has been greatly augmented . . . , will be able effectually to compel the Bey to release our citizens and make peace on fair and honorable terms." Concerning the recently renewed Napoleonic war in Europe, he stated, "Though we must deplore the effusion of human blood which this event will probably occasion, there is great reason to believe it will facilitate our negotiations regarding to the acquisition of *the Floridas* —, as the only probable means by which Spain can prevent Great Britain from seizing that country into her possessions, will be by throwing it into our hands. And there can be no injustice in our embracing any advantage that may accrue to us from a state of things which we were not instrumental in producing" ²⁸ This opportunistic statement was of great interest to its readers, since Tennesseans at the time hoped to gain possession of Florida for commercial and sectional reasons. Campbell, an astute politician, was well aware of the hopes of his constituents. ²⁹

When Campbell wrote his *Circular Letter* in April, 1805, American foreign affairs did seem serene, but on his return to Washington in December a situation had developed which had not been foreseen. On December 3 the main theme of Jefferson's annual message to Congress was the threat of war with England. The English attacks on American shipping,

²⁸Nashville *Tennessee Gazette & Mero District Advertiser*, April 10, 1805.

²⁹Channing, *The Jeffersonian System*, 151-153, refers to Jefferson's Florida policy.

which were later to play such an important part in bringing on the War of 1812, had increased as a result of the renewal of the war between England and France. Jefferson stated that these attacks by "private armed vessels" had changed considerably the aspect of the country's foreign relations. The injuries could perhaps be remedied peaceably, Jefferson thought, but some of them could be met by force alone, and possibly all of them might lead to force.³⁰ The President was uncertain.

The "private armed vessels," to which Jefferson referred in his message, were English ships engaged in seizing American vessels under pretext of an old English decree, the Rule of the War of 1756, which England was now enforcing stringently since her victory at the naval battle of Trafalgar (October, 1805). As claimed by the Rule, a neutral power was forbidden to trade with a country or colony during war-time unless that trade had existed during peacetime;³¹ and the Rule quite definitely effected the United States, which was now trading with the West Indian islands. Since the beginning of the war between England and France in 1793, the shipping interests of the United States had profited immensely because of their neutral carrier trade with Europe and the West Indies.³² In 1804, however, after the renewal of the Anglo-French war, the British ministry authorized English sea captains to seize American vessels engaged in trade with Europe and the West Indies.³³ It was because of the increase of these seizures in 1805 that Jefferson mentioned them so emphatically in his annual message. According to him, the English depredations on American vessels, if

³⁰Richardson, ed., *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, I, 382-388.

³¹A. L. Burt, *The United States, Great Britain and British North America* [1775-1818] (New Haven, 1940), 216-217; Channing, *The Jeffersonian System*, 174-177.

³²Henry Adams, *History of the United States*, 9 vols. (New York, 1921), II, 324-332.

³³For an excellent account of the maritime war between England and France, see Eli F. Hecksher, *The Continental System, An Economic Interpretation* (London, 1922).

allowed to continue, could very easily lead to war; and he advised Congress to act on the matter without delay.³⁴

But despite Jefferson's fears, the House of Representatives took no immediate action on the subject. English attacks continued, and during the winter two suggestions to meet the situation were made. On January 29, 1806, Representative Andrew Gregg of Pennsylvania, introduced a resolution calling for a complete non-importation of British goods into the United States until stoppage of American vessels on the high seas ceased. On February 10, a less forceful resolution, providing for non-importation of a limited number of English goods, was offered by Joseph H. Nicholson of Maryland. On March 5, the House began discussing the Gregg resolution, and for the next two weeks it and the Nicholson resolution were almost the sole topics of debate.³⁵

On March 11, Campbell made the first of many speeches in Congress on the subject of non-importation of English goods. He opposed non-importation as provided in the Gregg plan, he said. He could not understand, why "thousands of innocent persons [in the United States] should suffer distress and ruin, for the benefit of a few individuals—a few merchants;" The Gregg resolution, he declared, if accepted by Congress, would cause the agricultural sections of the United States to suffer; people other than merchants of the American seaboard should be considered: "The people whom I have the honor to represent are chiefly agriculturists, and it will always be my wish and pride, to support their interests, and to cherish and promote the agricultural interests of the country in general, so far as it may lie in my power." Despite the interests of his own constituency, however, he, as an American, was not " . . . prepared to see the nation suffer, without resistance to every indignity with which Great Britain may choose to treat her, and submit patiently to every aggression and outrage her cruisers, under her authority, may choose to commit on our citizens and com-

³⁴Richardson, ed., *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, I, 282-288.

³⁵*Annals*, 9 Cong., 1 Sess. (1805-1806), 412-413; Schachner, *Thomas Jefferson*, II, 808-811.

merce. I conceive it our duty," said Campbell, who should be rightfully considered as one of the earliest "warhawks" in American history, "to take measures as will prove to the world a determination on our part to resist injuries and maintain our rights."³⁶ Since the United States was rapidly becoming a commercial power, she should protect her commerce. Even so, he did not agree with certain other members of the House in the belief that the Gregg resolution, if enacted, would lead to war with England, because it was not to England's interest to go to war with the United States.³⁷

Speaking of the probable effects which non-importation might have on American shipping, he thought that the United States would suffer very little, since " . . . there are few articles now gotten from the dominions of Great Britain, which are necessary for our consumption, that may not be obtained from other markets." As for the possible effects of non-importation on England's cotton supply, Campbell held to what later became the Southern "King Cotton" opinion that England was dependent on the South for that staple: "Her [England's] manufactures cannot be carried on without raw materials, and she cannot procure this article [cotton] from any other quarter."³⁸ He was definitely opposed to the Gregg resolution because it would be disadvantageous to Southern farmers, whose shipments of cotton to England would be curtailed in retaliation as soon as the provisions of the resolution became effective. But, since the United States should not allow England to continue her attacks, some restrictive measure ought to be taken. Therefore, he suggested the following procedure: first, a high tariff should be placed on all English goods coming into the United States; second, if tariffs failed to force England to relent in her depredations on American shipping, an act providing for non-

³⁶*Annals*, 9 Cong., 1 Sess. (1805-1806), 706.

³⁷*Ibid.*, 715.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 716, 717. This attitude of the South, as here expressed by Campbell, later became something of an obsession, and was partially responsible for the South's willingness to enter the Civil War in 1861. See Frank L. Owsley, *King Cotton Diplomacy; Foreign Relations of the Confederate States of America* (Chicago, 1931), 15-25.

importation of certain English goods should be passed by Congress; third, if partial non-importation failed to bring about the desired result, complete non-intercourse with all English possessions should be established. To Campbell, these were the stages through which the United States should proceed in its relations with England.³⁹

A majority of the House members agreed with Campbell that the Gregg resolution was too drastic; and on March 13 it was dropped from consideration. The House, however, did not take to Campbell's proposal of tariff discrimination; and turned instead to a consideration of the Nicholson resolution, which would exclude certain English goods from the United States. This was essentially Campbell's second alternative, which he had advanced in his speech of March 11. The bill was debated at great length, and Campbell, along with a majority of the House, supported it. On March 26, it was passed by the House; shortly afterwards it was accepted by the Senate; Jefferson approved the plan; and it became effective November 16, 1806.⁴⁰

Meanwhile, Campbell also showed his approval of a more adequate military defense. His interest in this subject began in 1805, and continued throughout his service in the House and later in the Senate. Early in the Ninth Congress a resolution providing for the expenditure of \$150,000 for the fortification of American ports and harbors was introduced in the House. Debate on the question began on January 23, 1806, and at that time Campbell made a long speech in its favor, arguing that some type of protection was needed not only against England but against all marauders. Later in the session, in April, after intermittent debate during which Campbell reiterated his support of the appropriation, the amount requested was granted. In order to extend further the program of national defense, an additional \$250,000 was appropriated for the construction of fifty gunboats. This was

³⁹*Annals*, 9 Cong., 1 Sess. (1805-1806), 706-724.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 796, 824, 878, 1268.

an Administration measure, dear to Jefferson's heart, and as a matter of course Campbell supported it.⁴¹

In the spring of 1806, Jefferson appointed William Pinkney of Maryland and James Monroe of Virginia as commissioners to settle all matters of difference between the United States and England. In particular they were to negotiate the questions of impressment and colonial trade.⁴² They met with British commissioners; they reported to Jefferson in August that they had obtained a promise that impressments of American sailors would cease, but that no agreement could be reached concerning American trade with English colonies. Since non-impressment was better than nothing, Jefferson recommended to Congress that the non-importation act of April 18, 1806, be suspended; and on December 6, 1806, John Randolph, chairman of Ways and Means, offered a resolution that non-importation be suspended for one year. A majority of the House members, however, including Campbell and other Westerners, opposed such a long suspension, agreeing instead to suspend the act only until July 1, 1807. Campbell took no active part in this debate except to offer a few remarks favoring suspension, and when the vote was taken he cast his in the affirmative. But when the bill was sent to the Senate, that body, with its closer association with the conduct of foreign affairs, and believing that Congress should co-operate with Monroe and Pinkney in the negotiations they were still conducting in regard to trade relations with England, returned a bill to the House suspending non-importation until the end of 1807. Campbell, along with many other representatives who usually followed the Administration, switched his vote to accept the Senate bill, which was actually very similar to what Randolph had asked for in the first place.⁴³

⁴¹*Ibid.*, 387-388, 1287.

⁴²Schachner, *Thomas Jefferson*, II, 812-814.

⁴³*Annals*, 9 Cong., 2 Sess. (1806-1807), 119, 138, 140, 158. On December 31, 1806, Monroe and Pinkney signed a treaty with England. As it contained no agreement concerning American trade with the West Indies and nothing on impressment, Jefferson refused to sign it. *American State Papers, Foreign Relations*, III, 119, 138, 140, 147-151, 153, 156.

After the suspension of the non-importation act, a general feeling of security seems to have developed among the members of the House. Campbell's opposition to a Senate bill, introduced in the House on January 19, 1807, providing for an increase in the country's peace-time army, perhaps illustrates his feelings on security. Opposing the bill, he contended that there was no need for an increase, and that under existing conditions the militia of the various states could handle any trouble that might arise. The bill was referred to Committee,⁴⁴ but was allowed to die there.

House action on another subject, that of construction of additional gunboats for the navy, indicates both lethargy and Federalist opposition to Jefferson. In February, a measure providing for \$150,000 for the building of additional gunboats was introduced. Knowing that Jefferson approved the bill,⁴⁵ Campbell sanctioned it on the grounds that gunboats were the cheapest and the most effective defense for the long coast line of the United States. Because of their mobility, he said, gunboats were ideally suited for cruising along the coast. He admitted that he knew little of the subject, but since both the President and the Secretary of the Navy approved the appropriation, he was willing to grant it. Other members of the House were not such staunch, or blind followers of the President, however, and the only concession they made was to ask Jefferson why he preferred gunboats to frigates. A few days later Jefferson submitted such an explanation to the House, but his message was laid on the table, where, just as the military bill, it remained during the rest of the session.⁴⁶

In June, 1807, an event occurred which finally forced both Congress and the general public to realize that England was

⁴⁴*Annals*, 9 Cong., 2 Sess. (1806-1807), 432.

⁴⁵Jefferson was never a "big navy" man. He was opposed to large war vessels (frigates), also; and while President he favored limiting naval expenditures "in every possible way." A large navy, he believed, might cause the United States to become involved in disputes with other countries. Channing, *The Jeffersonian System*, 37.

⁴⁶*Annals*, 9 Cong., 2 Sess. (1806-1807), 462, 469, 470, 478.

determined to continue her policy of impressment; and Congress became very willing to provide for additional defenses. A government vessel, the American frigate *Chesapeake*, was stopped by an English frigate, the *Leopard*, and several sailors were removed from the American vessel. This act was looked on as a particularly flagrant violation of American neutrality and honor, and immediately there was a general demand for war with England. In answer to the popular clamor, Jefferson called a special session of Congress. When the Tenth Congress convened on October 26, however, cooler heads, including Jefferson's, had taken control; and instead of an immediate declaration of war they turned their efforts to a peaceable settlement of affairs with England.⁴⁷ The first action taken by the House was to increase navy appropriations for the year 1807. In the passage of this bill, Campbell took the leading role in his capacity as chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, to which he was appointed when the Tenth Congress convened.

When the Tenth Congress met, a new group of representatives, led by Joseph B. Varnum of Massachusetts, came into control of the House, replacing the group which had furnished the leadership for six years. The old group had looked to Nathaniel Macon of North Carolina and John Randolph of Roanoke for guidance.⁴⁸ Varnum was named Speaker of the House by a majority of one vote, his selection being brought about by a combination of representatives from the New England, western, and middle states. Varnum received fifty-nine votes for the speakership, whereas ten favorite sons

⁴⁷Of the *Chesapeake-Leopard* affair, Jefferson said, "Never since the battle of Lexington have I seen this country in such a state of exasperation as at the present, and even that did not produce such unanimity." Mayo, ed., *Jefferson Himself*, 276. Heckscher, *The Continental System*, 129, states that the affair and the whole subject of impressment "gave rise to a very pretty diplomatic conflict." See also James Fulton Zimmerman, *Impressment of American Seamen* (New York, 1925); Francis F. Beirne, *The War of 1812* (New York, 1949), 33-38; Channing, *The Jeffersonian System*, 170-173; and Lynch, *Fifty Years of Party Warfare*, 184.

⁴⁸For appraisals of Macon, see William E. Dodd, *The Life of Nathaniel Macon* (Raleigh, 1903); Lefler and Newsome, *North Carolina, The History of a Southern State*, 288, 310-311; and Lynch, *Fifty Years of Party Warfare*, 91, 176-177.

gathered a total of only fifty-eight votes. In the appointment of chairmen of the various House committees, Varnum selected his appointees entirely from those states which had supported him for the speakership. And Campbell, a Westerner, was appointed chairman of Ways and Means, replacing John Randolph.⁴⁹

This was one of the first times that a Westerner was placed in such a high-ranking position in Congress. Having served as a House member for only two terms, Campbell was now in a position of first-rate importance; and it seems especially significant that he took Randolph's place on the committee. That he was selected indicates, moreover, that he was considered as one of the most prominent representatives from his region. He had stuck by his party and this was his reward. His appointment was looked on as something of a dangerous precedent in some circles, however. For example, after learning of his appointment, Albert Gallatin, Secretary of the Treasury, wrote as follows to a friend: "Varnum has, much against my wishes, removed Randolph from Ways and Means, and appointed Campbell of Tennessee It was improper as related to public business, and will give me additional labor."⁵⁰ What Randolph thought of being replaced by the man whom he had earlier in the year called a "Prince of Prigs & Puppies" is unknown.

Despite the low opinion held of him by Gallatin and undoubtedly by others, Campbell began his activities as chairman of Ways and Means with a show of confidence. He might not know much about financial matters, with which he was to deal as chairman of Ways and Means, but during his short four years in Congress he had learned much about practical politics. On November 5 he presented a measure to the House providing for an increase in navy appropriations for the year 1807. The bill was read twice and referred to Committee of the Whole on the day after its introduction, at which time a spir-

⁴⁹*Annals*, 10 Cong., 1 Sess. (1807-1808), 792, 794.

⁵⁰Gallatin to Unknown, October ?, 1807, quoted in Adams, *John Randolph*, 222-223.

ited debate began. Campbell as sponsor of the bill spoke first, recommending that \$1,517,050.47 be appropriated.⁵¹

He was attacked immediately by Joseph Quincy of Massachusetts,⁵² who accused him of asking for a general appropriation with the intention of using part of it for the construction of a number of gunboats, which Quincy opposed. Campbell's reply was that he had conferred with the Secretary of Navy on this score. The timber which had been purchased could indeed be used in constructing gunboats, he said, but he had also been informed that the timber "... had been so selected that it could be appropriated to other purposes if necessary." Quincy rejoined by inquiring if the articles mentioned in the bill under discussion had already been purchased and paid for, or only contracted for; and if the materials had been purchased, he wanted to know what House appropriation had been used to pay for them. These were indeed embarrassing questions from Campbell's standpoint. The questions were answered by Representative John W. Eppes of Virginia, who was serving with Campbell on the Ways and Means Committee, and who was a close friend of the Tennessean both in public and private life. Eppes explained that certain extraordinary expenses had arisen during the summer of 1807 as a result of the *Chesapeake-Leopard* affair, and Jefferson, believing it his executive privilege and duty to inaugurate defense measures against England, had done so during a time when Congress was not in session. No expenses other than those made necessary by the exigency of the situation had been incurred; and one section of the bill before the House provided for payment of those expenses.⁵³

Quincy, anxious to make political capital, again demanded whether the goods had been paid for, and by whom. He was not attempting, he stated, to cast any blame for incurring

⁵¹*Annals*, 10 Cong., 1 Sess. (1807-1808), 804, 818.

⁵²Quincy was bitterly opposed to the Jeffersonian party and to the War of 1812. See, for example, James Truslow Adams, *New England and the Republic, 1776-1850* (Boston, 1927), 268-275.

⁵³*Annals*, 10 Cong., 1 Sess. (1807-1808), 818, 819-820.

expenses; but if he could not obtain information on the subject on the floor of the House, he would be forced to try some other method. Campbell flung the following rejoinder at him: "The President had declared that he deemed it necessary to procure those materials, because appearances indicated an approaching rupture [with England]; . . . The materials were stored; the Secretary of the Navy had said they were purchased. He [Campbell] conceived it immaterial whether the money was actually paid in one way or another Even had the Secretary appropriated money to this exigency which had been otherwise appropriated, it was the customary measure [in such cases]. There was a time when this doctrine was advocated by the very gentleman who now seemed to oppose it."⁵⁴

Campbell's sharp and somewhat unthinking words were followed by a few equally caustic remarks from Randolph, the ousted chairman of Ways and Means, who accused his successor of advocating a practice "which had not been heretofore considered as the true old Whig doctrine, the true Republican or Democratic doctrine" when he proposed expending money for one purpose after it had been appropriated for another. If Campbell was supported on the present bill, "an alarming—a damning heresy on the subject of politics was likely to become prevalent in this body," he said.⁵⁵ Quincy and Randolph thus forced Campbell into a very untenable position; and he replied that he had not meant to give the impression that it was immaterial where money came from in payment of the supplies, but that it was immaterial whether they had been paid for. Campbell was, of course, not consistent with his earlier remarks, but he maneuvered out of his predicament by appealing to the House to support the bill as a party measure. His request was granted on November 10, when the navy appropriation bill, as originally drawn up, was approved by a vote of 124 to 2.⁵⁶ Thus,

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 821.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 822.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 829-830, 852-853.

despite the heckling of Quincy and Randolph, the first bill presented and discussed by Campbell in his new capacity as chairman of Ways and Means was passed. Campbell learned quite definitely that he must be more careful and precise in his future sponsorship of bills.

Soon thereafter the House once more became involved over the question of construction of gunboats, when, on December 7, it received from the Senate a bill to increase the number of the vessels. Among the House members opposing the bill were several representatives who had differed with Campbell on other issues, Randolph, Elliot, and Quincy; of the members supporting the measure the most outspoken were Campbell and Jacob Crowninshield of Massachusetts. Elliot summed up the opposition argument on the first day of debate: "Nothing effectual, it is certain, can be done by gunboats. They have never been of use but as auxiliaries to the more extensive and substantial establishments [frigates of 74 guns]; and they have always been of so little comparative use as to render it impossible to ascertain the amount of service they have rendered."⁵⁷ Elliot was so bitter and passionate in his opposition to gunboats, and talked so long and hard that his voice weakened, and he could be heard only by those members of the House sitting near him.⁵⁸

After other members of the House expounded on the subject, Campbell concluded the argument for the bill. Indeed, this seems to have been his policy while serving as chairman of Ways and Means: to make his speeches in support of Administration measures on the last day on which the measures were debated, and sum up favorable arguments and appeal to the Republican representatives for their support. Such was the case on the gunboat bill. And this particular speech also shows that he did not shrink from the common practice in Congress of dealing in personalities. He denied that construction of additional gunboats would "drain the

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, 1109. See also *ibid.*, 1066-1172, for the House debates on the gunboat bill.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, 1121.

Treasury of the United States for a system of defense that would prove inefficient—for a mere useless experiment.” Very few members of the House knew much about the technicalities of the bill, and even less of the use of gunboats, he said. Everyone agreed that the country was facing a crisis with England, and that some type of protection was necessary. Some of the representatives wanted only to arm the state militia, but what was to happen to coast towns, he asked.⁵⁹

Continuing, he reminded his listeners that it was not the policy of the United States to build a large navy,⁶⁰ and if it were, the younger country could not hope to compete successfully with England in a naval race, especially in the construction of gunboats, since they were less expensive to build. But the United States needed some kind of naval defense immediately, and at least two years would be required to construct a substantial number of frigates. An adequate number of gunboats, on the other hand, could be built in a few months. The Secretary of the Navy had recently estimated the cost of constructing a gunboat at about \$5,000, and the annual expenses of such a vessel at \$11,000. In a *Report* of 1805, however, the Secretary had estimated the cost of building a 74-gun frigate at \$328,888, and the service expenses at \$192,500. Assuming a more personal approach to Elliot’s criticisms, Campbell threw off all restraints: “It will not be supposed that the weight of this evidence is diminished by the little criticisms of the gentleman from Vermont; no man who had heard them will think so. They do not merit, nor will they, I presume, receive any notice on this floor; but they will sink into obscurity, as the mere ephemeral effusions of embittered invective, unsupported by facts or reasoning.”⁶¹ Here Campbell perhaps added to an earlier charge, on another matter, that Elliot’s manner of speech was merely the “effervescence of an enthusiastic imagination, discharging with-

⁵⁹On December 5, 1807, the House had passed a bill providing for arming the state militia in case of foreign attacks. *Ibid.*, 1055.

⁶⁰See, for example, Channing, *The Jeffersonian System*, 30, 36-39, 44.

⁶¹*Annals*, 10 Cong., 1 Sess. (1807-1808), 1163.

out argument its ebullitions in such a style as was often heard in the House."

But this was not all Campbell had to say. In opposing the bill Elliot had damned Jefferson for advocating the construction of gunboats, and in the course of his diatribe remarked that because the President looked with favor on the bill that was being discussed, the members of the House would follow blindly in his footsteps and accept it. This remark was pounced upon by Campbell, and made the excuse for a longspun and interesting eulogy of Jefferson:

... I do not stand up in this House to vindicate the conduct of the Executive on this occasion. That is altogether unnecessary. His conduct will speak for itself and defy the attempts of his enemies to impeach its correctness. Nor am I to be considered, in the remarks I have made on this occasion, as defending the Executive; he stands in no need of defense. His well known faithful and unremitted exertions, for more than thirty years, in support of the rights and liberties of the American people, will be his sure, his best defense, and will vindicate his character against the malevolent shafts of vindictive malice. So long as virtue, wisdom, and patriotism, continue to be revered in the world, so long will his character remain a distinguished monument of the triumph of liberty and the rights of man over despotism and aristocracy, around which the sons of freedom will rejoice to rally; when the memory of those who attempt to defame him will have been forgotten, having vanquished and become obscured by the superior lustre of his well-earned fame, like the feeble gleam of the glow-worm before the splendid glory of the noon-day sun.⁶²

Perhaps Elliot was correct in February, 1807, when, in speaking of Campbell, he said, "There is more animation in his figures, there is more grace in his coloring than are to be found in the best productions of his associate artists." Be that as it may, Campbell took his seat after delivering his philippic; and almost immediately, after listening to short speeches by Quincy and Randolph in opposition to the gunboat bill, the House accepted the measure by the overwhelming vote of 111 to 19.⁶³ Again Campbell was instrumental in putting an Administration bill through the House.

⁶²*Ibid.*, 1165.

⁶³The bill provided for the construction of 188 gunboats. *Ibid.*, 1172. For a critical appraisal of Jefferson's gunboats, see John T. Morse, Jr., *Thomas Jefferson* (Boston, 1898), 259.

Within the next week, Jefferson learned of the latest of a series of Orders-in-Council issued by England: establishment, on November 11, 1807, of an absolute blockade of all European ports under French control.⁶⁴ Every vessel, including American ones, which attempted to trade with the Continent, was now subject to search by English ships. Jefferson's answer to this Order was to request Congress to place an embargo on all American commerce, and to ask that all American ships be forbidden to depart for foreign ports. The President's plan of action, essentially, coincided with the third step in a plan of procedure in regard to relations with England which Campbell had offered in the House on March 11, 1806, when he had discussed the earlier non-importation Act passed by Congress. Presumably, at that time Campbell had been speaking for the President.

Jefferson's request was approved by the Senate.⁶⁵ The House, on the other hand, debated the question for three days in secret session, and after a few minor changes also complied with the President's proposal. Although Campbell's full part in the House discussion is unknown, he did support and vote for the embargo bill.⁶⁶ It will also be remembered that non-importation of certain English goods had been established on April 18, and that on December 19, of 1806, non-importation had been suspended for one year. Shortly after the *Chesapeake-Leopard* affair, a group of Philadelphia merchants had sent a *Memorial* to the lower House of Congress demanding that the bill be repealed. At the time, Campbell, in speaking of the *Memorial*, had described it "as little less than an insult . . . If not direct, at least an indirect insult on their [the members of the House] dignity."⁶⁷ From this and from many other remarks made by him there is no doubt that he was a strong supporter of the embargo when it was debated in the House. Another bit of pertinent evidence is a

⁶⁴*American State Papers, Foreign Relations*, III, 269.

⁶⁵Channing, *The Jeffersonian System*, 211-213; Lynch, *Fifty Years of Party Warfare*, 187-190.

⁶⁶*Annals*, 10 Cong., 1 Sess. (1807-1808), 1222.

⁶⁷See *ibid.*, 961-982, for the House discussion of the *Memorial*.

letter he wrote to the editor of a Knoxville newspaper on the day the embargo passed Congress: “. . . —our differences with G. Britain still present a gloomy aspect— . . . At present we are proceeding with open doors to make all preparations in our power for the defense of our country. If we shall be able to preserve peace, it will be by preparing for war.”⁶⁸ That Campbell played a major role in putting the embargo act through Congress seems true beyond any reasonable doubt, particularly since he was chairman of one of the most important committees in the House. After the embargo was put into effect, he was one of its persistent advocates.

From the passage of the embargo act in December, 1807, until April 25, 1808, when the Tenth Congress recessed, the important topics of discussion in the House were the embargo and the increase in the army and navy; and Campbell was unusually active in the debates on these subjects. On January 27, 1808, he presented a bill providing for an increase in the country's military establishment, contending that the following units should be added to the army: one battalion each of riflemen and cavalry and one regiment of infantry, with the number of men in each company of those units already existing in the army to be increased from fifty to one hundred. His proposal was not satisfactory to some of the military-minded Congressmen, however, Roger Nelson of Maryland stating, for example, that the increases suggested would be “but a drop of water in the ocean.” After a somewhat desultory debate, the bill was referred to a select committee, but was never reported for discussion. The next important military measure to be considered was one containing practically the same provisions, which came from the Senate and was introduced in the House by Campbell.⁶⁹

⁶⁸Campbell to Editor, December 22, 1807, in *Wilson's Knoxville Gazette*, January 6, 1808. For Richard M. Johnson's support of the embargo, as expressed in a letter printed in the *Frankfort Palladium*, January 28, 1808, see Leland Winfield Meyer, *The Life and Times of Colonel Richard M. Johnson* (New York, 1932), 62-63.

⁶⁹*Annals*, 10 Cong., 1 Sess. (1807-1808), 1512-1514. On December 16, 1807, the House appropriated \$1,000,000 for the defense of ports and harbors. *Ibid.*, 1204.

The Senate bill, which was read on February 17, provided that the President should have power to raise one regiment of infantry and one battalion each of cavalry and riflemen. If war came, the number of men in each company of all branches of the army was to be increased from fifty to one hundred. Campbell stated, however, that some House members wanted even more men. As for himself, he said, he was more than willing at any time to consider "a measure calculated to prepare for war."⁷⁰ But the House was unwilling even to accept the bill under debate. Campbell, now an avowed militarist, was not to be denied. During the next week he put through an appropriation of \$300,000 for purchasing arms for future use by the army. In April he carried his militaristic inclinations still further by supporting the Administration on a measure calling for an increase of six thousand troops in the army, that is, five regiments of infantry and one each of riflemen, light artillery, and light dragoons to be enlisted for a five-year period.

Campbell was outspoken in his support of this army bill. England and France were both committing depredations against American shipping, he said, and national honor demanded preparation for future attacks. The United States had no assurance that one or both of the European powers might not turn on her at any moment, and it was the patriotic duty of the members of the House to prepare for such an emergency. His wishes were granted, the army bill passed, and the United States was launched into a program, albeit not a large one, of military preparation.⁷¹ Campbell had favored this program, as well as all other major military and naval measures adopted during the winter of 1807-1808; and by the spring of 1808, he was one of the leading militarists in Washington. In every way he was a forerunner of the

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, 1633.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, 1620-1621, 1639, 2006-2021, 2849-2852. The United States was, indeed, poorly prepared for war in 1812. See, for example, William Wood, *The War with the United States, A Chronicle of 1812* (Toronto, 1921), 20-29; and Beirne, *The War of 1812*. Leonard D. White, *The Jeffersonians, A Study in Administrative History* (New York, 1951), is very useful on this point.

"warhawks," or the members of Congress who spoke out for war with England in the period 1811-1812.

Intermingled with the discussion during January to April, 1807, on increasing the size of the army was another debate concerning the navy; and here again Campbell was a chief participant. On December 11, 1807, a bill had passed the House appropriating funds for construction of 185 additional gunboats. Now in January of the next year, Congress received a request from the Secretary of the Navy for an increase in navy personnel. This request was approved, and the number of sailors was increased from 1,425 to 2,697. In April, 1807, however, Campbell once more acted as Administration spokesman in opposition to the construction of frigates. He reminded his listeners that he had favored numerous other measures for defense, but stated that he could see no need for additional frigates. As chairman of Ways and Means, he was opposed to appropriating any additional funds for defense, especially since the Tenth Congress had already set aside between three and four million dollars for that purpose. At his suggestion the House postponed the frigate matter indefinitely.⁷² Campbell was indeed a faithful follower of Thomas Jefferson.

Campbell should by no means be considered as the most important member of the Jefferson party in the House of Representatives in the year 1807. On the other hand, he did attain a significant position in that body, for no congressman becomes chairman of a committee as powerful as Ways and Means unless he is a recognized member of the political party in power. Campbell rose rapidly in Jeffersonian party circles from 1803 to 1807. He supported the party on most issues, he proved to be an outstanding speaker and debater, he represented an area, the West, that was strongly Jeffersonian, and his party rewarded him for all these reasons. If John Randolph was important as a member of the party, so was Campbell. This was the case despite the fact that the two men were

⁷²*Annals*, 10 Cong., 1 Sess. (1807-1808), 1507, 2267, 2271.

extraordinarily different in their backgrounds, habits, and actions. Randolph, for various reasons, turned away from the party; Campbell supported the party; and the Tennessean replaced the Virginian as one of the leading Jeffersonian spokesmen in Congress. Campbell was a "sterling Republican" at home and in Washington.

Chapter IV

IN DEFENSE OF THE EMBARGO

A public issue in which Campbell was peculiarly interested was Jefferson's embargo;¹ and his attitude toward it may be stated quite simply: he favored the embargo when it was enacted; he was thoroughly outraged when shipowners refused to abide by it; he supported the various bills aimed at strengthening it; he argued consistently and vehemently that it should be retained; and he refused adamantly to vote for its repeal in 1809. He even fought a duel over the embargo.

On January 8, 1808, Jefferson's adherents in Congress passed a law requiring shipowners to give bond that they would not violate the embargo.² This law raised a storm of criticism in New England, where the embargo was never popular and never altogether adhered to. Some shipowners continued to risk voyages of their vessels, because of the enormous profits to be made if they could slip by English cruisers; and many merchants of the northeastern states in general, in protest of the requirement of giving bond, stepped up their shipment of goods into Canada, from where transshipments were made to Europe. This latter practice became so pronounced that on February 20, 1808, a bill was introduced in the House prohibiting it, too.³ When this last measure was brought up for consideration, congressional leaders from New England and the middle states tried to block its passage as well as to repeal the law of January 8. The first House member to speak against the bill was Barent Gardener, who represented an upstate region of New York, which was carrying on a very profitable trade with Canada in opposition to the embargo:

¹Heckscher, *The Continental System*, 127-148, presents an excellent survey account of the embargo and the various non-intercourse acts of the United States.

²*Annals*, 10 Cong., 1 Sess. (1807-1808), 79. See also Jefferson to Albert Gallatin, December 24, 1807, in the Library Edition of *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 20 vols. (Washington, 1903-1904), XI, 407; and White, *The Jeffersonians*, 427-428.

³*Annals*, 10 Cong., 1 Sess. (1807-1808), 1649-1650; Adams, *New England and the Republic*, 253-254; Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Maritime History of Massachusetts, 1783-1860* (Boston, 1941), 173-186.

Why we passed the embargo law itself, I have always been unable to tell. Why we have passed the subsequent laws for the purpose of rendering the original evil more perfect and more universal, God only knows. It does appear to me, sir, [Gardenier is here addressing Speaker Varnum] that we are led on, step by step, by an unseen hand. We are urged forward by a sort of spell, the ruin of our country . . . The more the original measure develops itself, the more I am satisfied that my first view of it was correct; that it is a sly, cunning measure. That its real object was not merely to prevent our vessels from going out, but to effect non-intercourse. Are the nation prepared for this? If you wish to try whether they are, tell them at once what is your object—tell what you mean—tell them you mean to take part with the Grand Pacificator; or else stop your present course. Do not go on forging chains to fasten us to the car of the Imperial Conqueror.⁴

In his closing remarks, Gardenier expressed what seems to have been his real motive, an accusation which was common among Jefferson's opponents, that of charging the presidential party with catering to France and Napoleon Bonaparte and against England in its embargo policy.⁵ The New Yorker thereby created a distinct commotion in the House of Representatives.

While Gardenier still had the floor, several Jeffersonians, including Campbell, jumped to their feet to call him to order. Speaker Varnum also requested Gardenier to keep within the rules of propriety, and to cease his incriminations. Gardenier rejoined by demanding the Speaker to keep order and asking that Campbell and his cohorts be made to take their seats. When order was finally restored, Gardenier added, "If the gentlemen have composed themselves, and are in a condition to hear I will proceed. I wish first, however, to put them at ease on one point. They are not of sufficient importance to have been the objects at whom I would level anything. I assure the gentlemen I did not mean them."⁶

⁴*Annals*, 10 Cong., 1 Sess. (1807-1808), 1653-1654.

⁵John Randolph made a similar charge in the debate in Congress in December, 1807, when the embargo act was passed. Channing, *The Jeffersonian System*, 212-213. See also Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Life and Letters of Harrison Gray Otis, Federalist, 1765-1848*, 2 vols. (Boston, 1913), II, 41-42. Excellent discussions of the partisanship arising in the United States over the embargo may be found in Adams, *New England and the Republic*, 255-280; and Charles Warren, *Jacobin and Junto, or Early American Politics as Viewed in the Diary of Dr. Nathaniel Ames, 1758-1822* (Cambridge, 1931), 183-244.

⁶*Annals*, 10 Cong., 1 Sess. (1807-1808), 1654.

Gardenier was spoiling for a fight, and his cutting remarks were not to be forgotten. He was allowed, however, to have his say against the embargo: it had stopped legal trade with Europe; if the embargo was strengthened as contemplated, trade with Canada would be prohibited absolutely; as a representative from a commercial state, he was opposed to any more restrictions on American commerce, he contended.⁷

After Representative Ezekiel Bacon of Massachusetts reprimanded Gardenier for his ungentlemanly speech, John Montgomery of Maryland asked that debate on the subject be continued the next day and that Gardenier be forced either to prove his insinuations or suffer the consequences. Montgomery's request was granted, and the next day Jefferson's more gallant followers almost stumbled over each other in their efforts to insult Gardenier. Most of these speakers were from the West. Richard M. Johnson of Kentucky, speaking directly to the New Yorker, accused him of slander. Johnson was followed by Campbell, who branded Gardenier's accusations as "infamous, groundless falsehoods." Campbell shouted also that Gardenier should be considered "... as the mere conduit used by those behind the screen to convey these groundless slanders to the public—the common trumpeter, who gives no importance to what he makes public, except what is derived merely from the place he occupies, or the duties assigned to him to perform. It is not therefore apprehended that what has been said on this occasion by that member will make any other or stronger impression on the public mind, than was made by the same tale, when handed to the public through the medium of party or hireling newspapers."⁸ These, too, were harsh words, and they were not to be the last ones on the subject.

Final debate on the bill to close off trade with Canada took place on February 28, and Gardenier was again one of

⁷*Ibid.*, 1657.

⁸*Ibid.*, 1667-1673, contains Campbell's complete speech. See also *ibid.*, 1657-1658, 1661. For a classic speech of January 5, 1813, in which Josiah Quincy attacked the Republican party, as Campbell here attacked Gardenier, see Harlow, *The History of Legislative Methods in the Period before 1825*, pp. 208-209.

its leading critics. Following Gardenier's speech, however, Campbell employed his old tactic of summing up the reasons why Republicans should support the bill. It would, he said, keep citizens, commerce, and merchandize at home. The purpose of the original embargo was to make foreign countries, especially England, realize the need of trade with the United States. But the desired result had not been forthcoming because of the refusal of certain groups, that is, New England merchants, to obey the law. Goods were being carried to Canada, and on to England. Unless all sections of the United States were made to abide by the law, it could never be effective. On his part, Campbell said, he was willing to permit the entry of goods to the United States, but goods should not be exported. Since these were also the President's wishes, he hoped the bill under debate would pass. The next day the bill did pass; Jefferson's embargo policy was strengthened; it was now against the law for Americans to trade with Canada.⁹

In the meantime Campbell became involved in a bitter personal dispute with Gardenier over the remarks which had passed between them during the debate of the bill. On February 23, Gardenier demanded that Campbell retract the statements Campbell had made about him. Campbell refused. Gardenier then wrote to Campbell: "I am therefore under the necessity of repeating the request contained in my note this morning for the last time."¹⁰ Campbell's answer to this, the next day, was to send his friend, John Eppes of Virginia, to seek satisfaction from Gardenier. The latter replied that he was willing to satisfy, fight a duel, whenever Campbell wished. A duel was arranged to take place on February 28, but the first effort of the two principals to shoot it out took a rather ridiculous turn. On arriving at the place selected for the duel on the appointed day, such a crowd of

⁹The bill also passed the Senate. *Annals*, 10 Cong., 1 Sess. (1807-1808), 17, 1707-1709, 1712. This and other extensions of the embargo are mentioned in Adams, *New England and the Republic*, 249-250.

¹⁰The complete correspondence between Campbell and Gardenier leading to their duel is printed in *Wilson's Knoxville Gazette*, March 30, 1808.

curious onlookers had assembled "to see the fun" that the encounter was postponed. On March 2, however, the duel was held without benefit of spectators; and Campbell shot his opponent through the chest.¹¹ In this affair the Tennessean not only demonstrated his personal courage and his willingness to endanger his life for his honor and his politics, but, according to one source of information, he met his future wife as a result of the encounter. After the duel Gardenier was carried to the nearby home of a relative of Benjamin Stoddert, who had been Secretary of the Navy in John Adams' cabinet. Campbell, as was becoming of a gentleman duellist, visited his fallen foe while the latter was recovering from his wound; and his interest was whetted in a direction other than paying a courtesy call on an adversary: he met and courted Harriet Stoddert, Benjamin Stoddert's daughter, whom he married in July, 1812.¹² As far as is known, this chain of events—a spirited debate in Congress, a duel, and a courtship and marriage—was the most colorful aspect of Campbell's life.

After his duel with Gardenier, Campbell returned to the House as if nothing particularly noteworthy had happened,¹³ and during the remainder of the first session of the Tenth Congress continued his activities in support of the Administration. On April 8 he wanted to know what was to be the policy of his Government should England revoke her Orders-in-Council during the forthcoming recess of Congress.¹⁴ Seeking an answer to this very important question, he sought to empower Jefferson to suspend the embargo during the summer of 1808 if developments should warrant such a suspension. His resolution to this effect was referred to Com-

¹¹Adams, ed., *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, I, 355; Irving Brant, *James Madison, Secretary of State, 1800-1809* (Indianapolis, 1953), 441; Bernard Mayo, *Henry Clay, Spokesman of the New West* (Boston, 1937), 321.

¹²Family Bible of the L. M. Brown Family; Will T. Hale and Dixon L. Merritt, *A History of Tennessee and Tennesseans*, 8 vols. (Chicago, 1913), II, 372.

¹³Adams, ed., *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, I, 512.

¹⁴For an excellent chronological table of the commercial war between England and France, including English Orders-in-Councils, French Decrees, and United States retaliatory legislation, see Heckscher, *The Continental System*, xiv-xvi.

mittee of the Whole and became the main topic of discussion in the House for about ten days. Various efforts were made to kill his proposal, however, with Randolph and Quincy leading the attack. Randolph, for instance, tried to cloud the issue by debating the question of arming the state militia of the various states; an attempt was next made to consider a bill on the construction of post roads, which also failed; and on April 11, Quincy consumed most of the day reading petitions from numerous Massachusetts towns demanding that the embargo be repealed.¹⁵ On April 12, after Randolph again tried vainly to side-track the issue by speaking on the subject of frauds in land warrants, by a vote of 55 to 20 the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole for discussion of Campbell's resolution.¹⁶

The Tennessean defended his proposal by arguing that it was of great importance to people living near the seacoast, for if commercial relations between the United States and Europe improved, those people would wish, as everyone knew, to resume shipping activities as soon as possible. Congress, he said, should not have to be called into special session to handle a situation which, although not necessarily likely, could be foreseen. As chairman of Ways and Means, he was positive that the Government ought not to have to bear the expense of a special session. Jefferson's critics were opposed to granting him any more powers, that was true, but—despite their objections to Campbell's proposal—they were able only to stall proceedings for a few days; and on April 16, the House dispensed with Campbell's resolution in order to consider a similar one from the Senate. The Senate measure was accepted, and was approved by Jefferson. On April 25, Congress recessed until the first Monday in November.¹⁷

¹⁵See Sidney Howard Gay, *James Madison* (Boston, 1884), 280.

¹⁶*Annals*, 10 Cong., 1 Sess. (1807-1808), 2066-2067, 2070-2080, 2083. For additional discussions of the resistance to the embargo and the failure to enforce it, see Brant, *James Madison, Secretary of State*, 473-480, and White, *The Jeffersonians*, 443-473.

¹⁷*Annals*, 10 Cong., 1 Sess. (1807-1808), 2087-2172, 2189, 2241-2245, 2260, 2284; Adams, *New England and the Republic*, 248-265; A. T. Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and the Empire, 1793-1812*, 2 vols. (New York, 1892), II, 291-292.

About three weeks afterwards, one of Campbell's numerous *Circular Letters*, addressed to the people of Tennessee, and which was his customary practice at the close of a session of Congress, was published by the newspapers of his state. This particular *Letter* concerned American relations with England and France. Campbell was confident that the embargo should be continued. "So soon as they revoke their orders and decrees in regard to us," he maintained, "it will then no doubt be considered proper to remove the embargo —." ¹⁸ Should war come, he would be the first to support it, but he hoped that war would be avoided. He believed, however, that the best way to prevent war was to continue to prepare for it, since no country, he said, would attack the United States if she were fully prepared to defend herself. He did not think that any new taxes would be levied if war came, at least not at the beginning of the war. He trusted that Tennessee would support a war if it came. ¹⁹

On November 7, 1808, Campbell was back in the capital for the meeting of the second session of the Tenth Congress; and he was again selected chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, ²⁰ in which capacity he continued to support the policies of President Jefferson. Once more he interested himself especially in the problems of the embargo and non-intercourse, and he again assumed a leading role in the House. And although absent from the House a great part of the time because of illness, he was instrumental in putting through several important measures advocated by the President. Throughout the session he continued to support a strong foreign policy; and time after time he made extremely militaristic speeches. He was not only a sort of political workhorse, but in the truest possible sense he was one of the first "warhawks" in Congress.

¹⁸*Wilson's Knoxville Gazette*, May 18, 1808.

¹⁹Despite Campbell's opinion on the subject of taxes, it was not long after war was declared against England before Congress resorted to a direct tax and to internal duties. Campbell appealed to Tennesseans to support these new levies in a *Circular Letter*, dated August 16, 1813. Tennessee Historical Society Collection.

²⁰*Annals*, 10 Cong., 2 Sess. (1808-1809), 472.

A good part of Jefferson's annual message to Congress had to do with England and France and their policies toward American shipping. The President favored a continuation of the embargo, but concluded that a decision on the matter should be left to Congress. Three days after the annual message was presented, that part of the message having to do with the embargo was referred to a select House committee, of which Campbell was named chairman.²¹ It is worthy of note, too, that from about this time until the end of the Tenth Congress (except when absent because of illness), Campbell not only served as Ways and Means chairman but also as head of the House Committee on Foreign Relations. There is absolutely no question that he thus was one of the most important and influential members of Congress.

It is common knowledge among American historians that Albert Gallatin helped prepare a *Report* on the question of continuing the embargo. More precisely, it should be said that Gallatin and perhaps others prepared the *Report*; that the *Report* was made to Congress; and that the document is, and was, known as "Campbell's Report," and was read by Campbell in the House on November 22, 1808.²² The *Report* recited in clear and compact form the injuries inflicted on the United States and France since the year 1804. In regard to the embargo, the *Report* maintained, "There is no other alternative but war with both nations [France and England], or a continuation of the present system. For war with one of the belligerents only, would be submission to the edicts and will of the other; and a repeal in whole or in part of the embargo must necessarily be war or submission. A general

²¹*Ibid.*, 483; Richardson, ed., *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, I, 451-456.

²²Henry Adams credits Gallatin with "drafting" the Campbell *Report*, and calls the *Report* "probably the best statement ever made of the American argument against the British government and the orders in council." Henry Adams, *The Life of Albert Gallatin* (Philadelphia, 1879; reprinted New York, 1943), 378. Irving Brant, *James Madison, Secretary of State*, 471, remarks that the *Report* "contained the views of the incoming administration. The report was prepared by Gallatin, . . . but the historical survey was so completely based on Madison's writings and oral arguments as to indicate joint authorship. It even drew on his [Madison's] private correspondence."

repeal without arming, would be submission to both nations. A general repeal and arming of our merchant vessels, would be war with both, and war of the worse kind; suffering our enemies to plunder us without retaliation upon them. A partial repeal, must from the situation of Europe, necessarily be actual submission to one of the aggressors, and war with the other."²³ This was a very realistic statement of a serious situation; and, despite who wrote it, the *Report* was consistent with Campbell's ideas and past actions. The Tennessean should have some credit for the *Report*, it would seem.

Continuing the *Report*, Campbell argued that the aggressions of England and France against American commerce were "to all intents and purposes, a maritime war waged by both nations against the United States."²⁴ If England and France persisted in their policies, he said, the only effectual method the United States had of resisting them was war. He and his committee should like, he concluded, to present three resolutions for House approval. By accepting the committee's plan of action the House members would demonstrate that they, too, were no longer willing to stand for coercion by the two warring European countries. The resolutions, which resembled proposals of a similar nature later supported by the "warhawks" of 1811-1812, were: first the United States could not, "without a sacrifice of their rights, honor, and independence," submit to the edicts of England and France; second, in the future, no English or French vessel, under any condition, was to call at an American port; and third, "measures ought to be immediately taken for placing the country in a more complete state of defense." When Campbell finished presenting the *Report*, the House indicated the importance of the document by ordering five thousand copies printed for distribution.²⁵

On November 28, the first of Campbell's three resolutions was brought up for discussion, and until it was accepted two

²³*Annals*, 10 Cong., 2 Sess. (1808-1809), 519. For the complete *Report*, see *ibid.*, 514-521.

²⁴*Ibid.*, 520.

²⁵*Ibid.*, 519, 521.

weeks later it was almost the sole topic before the House. And from the beginning the *Report* was attacked viciously by the Federalists. Quincy of Massachusetts flamed: "The course advocated in that report is . . . loathsome; the spirit it breathes disgraceful; the temper it is likely to inspire neither calculated to regain the rights we have lost, nor preserve those which remain to us."²⁶ Several other unalterable opponents of Jefferson followed Quincy, all of them arguing against the resolution on the usual grounds offered month in and month out by the commercial interests of the country. In their minds, the embargo was entirely objectionable.

Opposition to the *Report* also came from some rather surprising sources. Some of the more prominent Republicans, even some of those who later gained renown as "warhawks," including Richard M. Johnson of Kentucky and John J. Jackson, the latter a brother-in-law of James Madison himself, were verbose in their opposition. In truth, after a careful study of the speeches of these Republicans and of the Federalists, one must conclude that many of the former feared war and that the latter merely expressed their usual antipathy for the embargo. The gist of the matter is that excited speaker after speaker consumed an excessive amount of time listing the insults which the United States had received from England and France, but most of them were opposed to acceptance of the resolution.²⁷ But Campbell spoke as might be expected; and the considered opinion of one famous historian, Henry Adams, is that of all those who participated in the debate, only Campbell "took a tone which might be called courageous."²⁸ This is high praise indeed.

During the extended discussion on the first resolution of his *Report*, Campbell spoke three times. On November 28, he placed the resolution before the House, and in a short statement expressed the hope that it would be adopted. In

²⁶*Ibid.*, 524.

²⁷See, for example, *ibid.*, 581-590, 634-659, for speeches by Johnson and Jackson.

²⁸Adams, *History of the United States*, IV, 380.

his second speech on the subject, on December 6, he reminded his listeners that some of the congressmen had drifted away from the subject at hand during the course of the debate; and he thought it "high time to bring our minds back to the real question, which we are about to decide."²⁹ Why so much time was being utilized in debate was beyond him, he said, for if the House members were indeed patriotic Americans, they would cease the extended discussion and accept the resolution. All of them had admitted in their speeches that foreign aggressions on American commerce had occurred. He believed, however, that he should restate the purposes for which the *Report* had been made. Moreover, since the opposition had charged that American commerce had been ruined by the embargo, he thought that he also ought to consider that matter.

According to his argument, there was no permanent trade between the United States and England and her colonies, for England "never opens the ports of her colonies to your ships, except when forced by necessity to do so." When the embargo was laid, he said, American commerce was prohibited from every European country, Sweden excepted; and when American ships attempted to trade with Europe under these conditions they were liable to confiscation, if captured. President Jefferson, however, had sought to prevent such a consequence by the imposition of the embargo. Beneficial effects of the embargo outweighed any possible drawbacks: "When your trade was in this situation, . . . the embargo was laid, and like a shield intervened and saved it from certain destruction. Yes, sir, I venture to affirm, without the hazard of contradiction from any well informed merchant of candor, as my information is derived from the most responsible authority, that the embargo has saved the American people more than \$100,000,000, that would, if it had not been laid, most undoubtedly have fallen into the hands of the belligerent

²⁹*Annals*, 10 Cong., 2 Sess. (1808-1809), 530-531, 714.

Powers.”³⁰ As if this were not praise enough, the next day Campbell reiterated his belief—long held and previously expressed—that it was the British Orders-in-Council and French Decrees, not the embargo, which had disrupted American commerce.³¹ There was no question that shipping had fallen off, but the embargo was the result rather than the cause of this development: “This is a truth supported by facts that cannot be denied; remove the embargo, and you expose your trade, naked and defenceless, to certain destruction—the same that would have taken place if it had not been laid Will gentlemen say that this would be a more desirable situation than you are in at present? . . . Is it not better and much more honorable for this country that your produce should even rot in your warehouses, than it should be enjoyed by your enemies, and used by them for your destruction?”³²

Having thus warmed up to his subject, Campbell also rendered a partisan vindication of the embargo as an Administration measure. He had learned his political lessons well. When the embargo was established, he said, it was the general belief of members of the Republican party that France and England would revoke their Orders and Decrees when they realized that their own subjects were suffering from a lack of indispensable goods which could be imported only from the United States. He argued now, as he had argued before, that even though the expected result had not come about, the Administration could not be held responsible. Only England and France were responsible for permitting their people to suffer. The President’s party was not “culpable for anticipating such events.” For all these reasons,

³⁰*Ibid.*, 729; *ibid.*, 714-730 contains the speech made December 6. Channing, *The Jeffersonian System*, 216-219, concludes that the embargo did not ruin American business and that the embargo was both supported in Virginia and opposed in New England mainly for political reasons.

³¹Robert G. Albion, *The Rise of New York Port, 1815-1860* (New York, 1939), 166-167, refers to the increase of trade with Spanish America as a result of the embargo. See also Morison, *The Maritime History of Massachusetts, 187-195*; W. W. Jennings, *The American Embargo, 1807-1809* (Iowa City, 1921); and A. C. Clauder, *American Commerce as Affected by the Wars of the French Revolution and Napoleon, 1793-1812* (Philadelphia, 1932).

³²*Annals*, 10 Cong., 2 Sess. (1808-1809), 730; see also *ibid.*, 730-753.

Campbell concluded, he hoped that his *Report* would be accepted. But if the other members of the House did not consider the *Report* forceful enough, he was ready and willing to begin preparations for war. If the House wanted war, it should pass a resolution to that effect. He would vote for war, because the time "had come to unite the people of America; we join issue with the gentlemen as to temporizing policy; we are for decisive measures; we have not, we will not, now temporize. We say there is no middle course. We are, in the first place, for cutting off all intercourse with those Powers who trample upon our rights. If that will not prove effectual we say take the last alternative, war, with all its calamities, rather than submission or national degradation."³³

Thus, once more Campbell gave his full support to the embargo, speaking both as a Republican with strong militaristic leanings and as a man of courage. At the time, he was the only House member to speak out boldly and unequivocally for war unless England and France ceased their depredations on American shipping. Long before the other members favored war, he was willing to resort to it. And, inveterate politician that he was, he appealed to the Republicans to vote for the first resolution of his *Report* for party reasons. Several other partisan speeches were also made during the closing debates; and on December 13 his resolution was accepted by an overwhelming vote. A few days later the two other resolutions which he had introduced were also adopted, and at the same time referred to select committees. The second resolution, having to do with commercial relations with England and France, was referred to the House Foreign Relations Committee, headed by Campbell. The third resolution of the *Report*, providing for a more adequate defense, was referred to the Military Committee.³⁴

On December 26, the two committees returned reports to the House. The resolution brought in by the Military Com-

³³*Ibid.*, 747, 753.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 855, 894, 895, 910.

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mittee was a forceful one: enlistment of 50,000 volunteers, to serve in the army for two years; but it went too far for the timid members. The resolution was adopted, but never passed the third reading after being drawn up as a bill. And, as it happens, the measure which Campbell introduced as chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee probably was the important factor in turning the House away from the military bill. The House simply would not go along with Campbell in his efforts toward forceful action. A declaration that the United States would not be insulted was one thing—and this had been expressed in the first resolution of Campbell's *Report*, and had been approved by the House on December 13—but complete non-intercourse with England and France, which Campbell proposed through his Foreign Relations Committee, was another thing. According to Campbell, the United States should establish a complete non-intercourse with the two countries, and no goods from England and France should be imported until their Orders and Councils were revoked or modified. Furthermore, his committee suggested that when the two European countries ceased their attacks on American commerce, Jefferson was to give public notice by proclamation that both the embargo and the non-intercourse acts were repealed.³⁵

In making these proposals, Campbell thought that he was carrying out the wishes of the majority of the House, but such was decidedly not the case. After Campbell's non-intercourse bill passed two readings, it, like the military bill, was not approved. The House simply was not ready to go much beyond adopting a statement that it was comprised of honorable men, which was proclaimed when the first resolution of Campbell's *Report* was approved. But the House was not alone in its unwillingness to take drastic action. Jefferson, himself, was questioning the further usefulness of the embargo. A contributing factor, although certainly not the decisive factor, to House action on the non-intercourse bill was Campbell's absence from Congress, because of sickness,

³⁵*Ibid.*, 910-912, 1167-1170.

during a large part of the two months after he introduced the bill.³⁶ In his absence, his place as chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee and as head of the House Committee on Foreign Relations was filled by Carey Wilson Nichols of Virginia, whom Jefferson looked on as his special spokesman in the House after John Randolph was removed from the chairmanship of the Ways and Means Committee.³⁷ What would have been the outcome on Campbell's non-intercourse measure had he been present in Congress throughout the winter of 1809 can not, of course, be answered. The story would surely have been somewhat different, but the end result most likely would have been the same. Many Congressmen and other influential people of the United States, particularly Easterners who were anxious to resume the commerce that had been interrupted in 1807, agreed that the embargo should be repealed. Neither one man nor a small minority could hope to stem the implacable tide of opinion against the embargo in 1809, of course. Campbell tried, but he failed. The House was not yet in the hands of the "warhawks;" although, on January 9, 1809, Congress did pass an Enforcement Act, aimed at halting trade with Nova Scotia and the West Indies.³⁸

Numerous Federalist petitions against the embargo were presented in Congress in January, 1809.³⁹ On January 30, both because of this pressure and heavy sentiment elsewhere in opposition to the embargo,⁴⁰ Representative Nichols called up for consideration a resolution providing for termination of the embargo on June 1, 1809. Except for those sections related to trade with England and France, the embargo was to be repealed on March 4, 1809; after that date, on May 20, a complete non-importation of English and French goods

³⁶Campbell to Thomas Corry, January 24, 1809, in Campbell Papers (in possession of Mrs. Susan M. Brown).

³⁷*Annals*, 10 Cong., 2 Sess. (1808-1809), 1432; Harlow, *The History of Legislative Methods in the Period before 1825*, p. 173; George Tucker, *The Life of Thomas Jefferson*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1837), II, 220.

³⁸Heckscher, *The Continental System*, 132-133.

³⁹*Annals*, 10 Cong., 2 Sess. (1808-1809), 1188, 1240, 1351, 1375, 1777.

⁴⁰See Patrick, *Florida Fiasco*, 43-49, for references to smuggling from St. Mary's, Georgia, and Fernandina, Florida, at this period.

into the United States was to be enforced; and all armed vessels were to be excluded from American waters after March 4.⁴¹ As is well known, Jefferson gave his reluctant consent to this act of Nicholas,⁴² but his friend and admirer, Campbell, still believed in the usefulness of the embargo. If Campbell had been present, it is quite likely that he would have opposed even the introduction of such a resolution. Be that as it may, debate began on the Nicholas proposal on February 15 and continued for the rest of the month.

Campbell made his only extended speech on repeal of the embargo and enactment of the non-intercourse measure on February 20. He was surprised, he said, to see the House members taking such a remarkably different stand on the embargo from the one "a few weeks ago." He shamed his colleagues for their inconsistency and irresponsibility, and beseeched Southerners and Westerners to hold out for the embargo, warning them that if non-intercourse was established New England would have no foreign competition, and would therefore be able to furnish the rest of the country with its manufactured goods at its own prices.⁴³ No adequate substitute for the embargo had been proposed; and he laid his position squarely before Congress. Moreover, in view of his recognized position as a leader in the House, he had a full right to speak:

I am in favor of the non-intercourse law before you, and always have been, as connected with the embargo; believing those combined measures would operate most powerfully on the interests of your adversaries, and maintain the rights, the character, and honor, of your country. But I am opposed to a repeal of the embargo, either wholly or partially, unless you take a measure at least equally strong in its place. This was my opinion since the commencement of the session, and I had fondly indulged the hope until very lately it was the opinion of a large majority of the House. It is my opinion that, under existing circumstances, the best interests of the nation, as well as its honor and character abroad, require the embargo to be continued until the time ar-

⁴¹*Annals*, 10 Cong., 2 Sess. (1808-1809), 1232.

⁴²Adrienne Koch, *Jefferson and Madison, The Great Collaboration* (New York, 1950), 249-250; Mayo, ed., *Jefferson Himself*, 282-283; Schachner, *Thomas Jefferson*, II, 876-886.

⁴³*Annals*, 10 Cong., 2 Sess. (1808-1809), 1475-1487, 1499, contains Campbell's two speeches on the non-intercourse bill.

rives, at which it will be necessary and proper to take, in its place, a stronger ground, a more efficient measure of resistance, which in my view, must be war alone.⁴⁴

He would, he concluded, accept the other sections of the bill, but he would not vote to repeal the embargo. Here again, as Henry Adams would say, Campbell was a man of courage. It is, also, more than likely, although it can not be proved beyond a shadow of a doubt, that George Washington Campbell, by his speeches and his reputation among the voters of the West, had a great deal to do with building up those sentiments in the West which swept the "warhawks" into Congress during 1810 and 1811. It is a certainty that his attitude toward England in 1808-1809 was strikingly similar to the "warhawk" attitude in 1810-1812.

Campbell's efforts to hold up repeal of the embargo was a cry in the wilderness, however, and, on February 22, 1809, the House laid aside its own non-intercourse measure to consider one which the Senate had passed.⁴⁵ Five days later, this bill, which contained practically the same provisions as had the House bill, was accepted by the House.⁴⁶ Campbell was not present when the bill was approved. He had, however, made his position plain: embargo or war. Maybe he was absent because of sickness; maybe he stayed away because he was sick at heart over what he considered the unfaithfulness of the members of his party.⁴⁷ If he was to remain consistent with his many speeches and private letters, he had to support the embargo. On more than one occasion he had predicted that war would result between the United States and England if the restrictions on American commerce with Europe were removed. He realized that if American merchants were not restrained, they would renew their foreign commerce, thus

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 1476-1477.

⁴⁵Early in February, 1809, a majority caucus, Campbell presumably not attending, decided by a vote of 61 to 2 to repeal the embargo. Harlow, *The History of Legislative Methods in the Period before 1825*, p. 195.

⁴⁶*Annals*, 10 Cong., 2 Sess. (1808-1809), 1504, 1541; Brant, *James Madison, Secretary of State*, 452, 469-477.

⁴⁷Jefferson had long realized that the embargo could not be maintained indefinitely. Jefferson to Thomas Leib, June 23, 1808, in *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, Library Edition, XII, 77.

again opening their vessels to attack by England. He believed that such attacks were certain to occur, and that they would arouse public opinion in the United States to such a pitch that another general demand for war would result.⁴⁸ Next time war would come. That he was entirely correct on this score is borne out by later events. And, it should be reiterated that Campbell ought to be credited with being one of the more bellicose forerunners of the "warhawks" of the War of 1812. Indeed, it is quite possible that Campbell of Tennessee was the original "warhawk" of the West.⁴⁹ There is not much doubt that he refused to run for re-election to Congress in 1809 because he was disgusted at the repeal of the embargo. He left Washington, but he could not stay away; and he eventually had the pleasure of voting for the war which he wanted with England.

⁴⁸For Richard M. Johnson's expression of this same belief, see Meyer, *The Life and Times of Richard M. Johnson*, 70. Campbell was by no means by himself in making this prediction.

⁴⁹Beirne, in "The War Hawks Swoop Down," a chapter in his *The War of 1812*, pp. 64-67, discusses fluently the activities of the better-known "warhawks" such as Henry Clay, John C. Calhoun, Felix Grundy, and Richard M. Johnson, but as is the custom with most writers on the subject, Beirne does not mention Campbell.

Chapter V

WARHAWK

In April, 1809, Campbell announced that he would not seek re-election to Congress. Both his health and his private affairs were in poor condition, he said, and he wished to use all his time improving them.¹ For six months he held no public office, but in the latter part of November he became judge of the newly created Tennessee Supreme Court of Errors and Appeals. He was elected to the position by unanimous vote of the State Legislature; he received his commission of office on November 24.²

The Tennessee Supreme Court of Errors and Appeals, as set up by an Act of November 16, 1809, existed for only a short time. Campbell, himself, was a member of the Court for less than two years. In general, the Court may be considered as an experiment, or as an effort to settle the relatively undesirable judicial system of Tennessee at the time. Shortly after Tennessee was organized as a state, the powers of the Superior Court of Law and Equity and of the County Courts of Pleas and Sessions were defined, but no provisions were made for a court of final jurisdiction. Three judges sat on the Superior Court, and one of their important duties was to travel about the state and sit with the judges of the various county courts. While adjudicating cases in collaboration with a county judge, the three Superior Court judges and the county judge comprised the highest court in Tennessee. But these men did not serve as a supreme court of appeals, and the result was that in many cases decisions were rendered in one county which did not coincide with those handed down in another county. By the year 1807, this practice was carried to such an incongruous point that there developed a general demand in the state for a reform of the judicial system.

¹*Wilson's Knoxville Gazette*, April 15, 1809.

²*Tennessee Commission Book*, May, 1807-October, 1815, p. 185; *Tennessee Senate Journal*, 1809, p. 187. See Edward Scott, ed., *Laws of the State of Tennessee, Including Those of North Carolina, . . . from the Year 1775 to the Year 1820 Inclusive*, 2 vols. (Knoxville, 1821), I, 1148-1156.

A supreme court was wanted in particular. No changes were made in the system in 1807, however, other than to increase the number of judges on the Superior Court from three to four. The stipulation was also made by the General Assembly that at least three of the four judges were to attend every sitting of the Superior Court. It was hoped that in this way there would be more harmony in the decisions of the Court.³

But the palliative of increasing the personnel of the Superior Court failed to improve the deplorable condition into which judicial affairs in Tennessee had evolved, and contradictory opinions continued to be handed down. Accordingly, by the summer of 1809 there developed another general demand in the state for a supreme court. Tennessee was expanding rapidly in wealth, population, and commerce, and of importance also was the demand for a court which could adjudicate the many conflicting land claims throughout the state. The concensus of opinion was that only a supreme court could untangle the many complicated legal questions with which the people of the state were faced.⁴ One of the leaders in the movement for a supreme court was Thomas Hart Benton, who was a member of the General Assembly.

It was in answer to this widespread demand that an Act establishing a Supreme Court of Errors and Appeals was passed, November 16, 1809, by the State Legislature. The Court, according to the law, was to have final jurisdiction over all legal questions arising in the state, and was to begin its duties on January 1, 1810. To improve further the judicial system, Tennessee was divided into five districts, each having a circuit court. The counties included in each district and the judges serving on the circuit courts during the years 1810 and 1811, when Campbell was a member of the Supreme Court, are shown in the following table:⁵

³*Ibid.*, 546-547; Nashville *Impartial Review*, August-September, 1807; Enrolled Acts of Tennessee (Tennessee Land Office and Archives, Nashville).

⁴*Wilson's Knoxville Gazette*, June-July, 1809; Samuel Cole Williams, "The Genesis of the Tennessee Supreme Court," *Tennessee Law Review*, VI (February, 1928), 80-82.

⁵*Tennessee Senate Journal*, 1809, p. 186; *Wilson's Knoxville Gazette*, November 4, 1809.

CIRCUIT COURT DISTRICTS AND JUDGES IN TENNESSEE,
1810-1811

Districts	Counties	Judges
First	Campbell	William Cocke
	Carter	Samuel Powell
	Claiborne	
	Grainger	
	Greene	
	Hawkins	
	Sullivan	
	Washington	
Second	Anderson	James Trimble
	Bledsoe	David Campbell
	Blount	
	Cocke	
	Jefferson	
	Knox	
	Rhea	
	Roane	
Third	Sevier	
	Franklin	Nathaniel Williams
	Jackson	
	Overton	
	Smith	
	Warren	
Fourth	White	
	Bedford	Thomas Stuart
	Davidson	
	Maury	
	Rutherford	
	Sumner	
	Williamson	
Fifth	Wilson	
	Dickson	Parry W. Humphreys
	Hickman	
	Humphreys	
	Montgomery	
	Robertson	
	Stewart	

As provided by the Act, the Supreme Court was to consist of two judges, each receiving a salary of \$1500 a year. The two judges were to sit annually with the Circuit Court judges in Jonesborough, Knoxville, Carthage, Nashville, and Clarksville, the important population centers of the time. When sitting thus, they were to make up the highest court of appeal in the state, and the Court's decisions were to be final.⁶

Campbell's tenure of office as a member of the Court was too short to enable him to establish a reputation as a jurist. It may be also that he was not particularly suited for the position, and it is certain that his heart and interests were in Washington rather than in the affairs of the Court. Although the materials on his service on the Court are either limited or unavailable, enough information does exist to reach some conclusions as to his ability as a judge and of the amount of work which he accomplished. During the first six months of 1810, he and his colleague on the Supreme Court bench, Hugh Lawson White, who earlier had been Governor Willie Blount's private secretary and who in the year 1836 gained some national prominence as a presidential candidate of the Whig party, tried no cases. On June 1, 1810, at Carthage, in the Circuit Court of the Third District, the Supreme Court heard its first case, one involving the ownership of a small piece of property near Carthage. From Carthage the two judges proceeded to sittings held in the other four districts. Although neither Campbell nor White had been designated as chief justice, White served in that capacity in the trials which they attended. This was actually a very sensible solution of the problem, for White had gained much practical experience in inferior local and state courts, whereas Campbell had seldom entered a court since the year 1803.⁷

⁶*Tennessee Senate Journal*, 1809, pp. 173, 183. Thomas Hart Benton was a member of the Tennessee Senate at this time, and he is credited with the sponsorship of the bill that created the Supreme Court of Errors and Appeals. William N. Chambers, "Thomas Hart Benton in Tennessee, 1801-1812," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, VIII (December, 1949), 319-320.

⁷Minute Book, Tennessee Supreme Court of Errors and Appeals, 1810-1811, p. 1 (Tennessee State Library and Archives). See also L. Paul Gresham, "The Public Career of Hugh Lawson White," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, III

A great majority of the cases heard by Campbell and White were concerned with the ownership of land, and while on the bench they were never called upon to render any decisions of a policy making nature. After Washington, Campbell was undoubtedly bored with his new position. He was very conscientious in attending to his duties as a judge, however, and was present at every sitting of the Court until June, 1811.⁸ According to reports he was extremely patient while cases were under discussion, and it was the opinion of the members of the Nashville bar, in their obituary of Campbell dated February 19, 1848, that "... so far as any of his decisions have come to our notice ... we consider them as being fully equal to any of his day." The obituary added candidly, however, that while serving as judge he failed to build up "... a judicial character of great eminence."⁹ This appraisal of Judge Campbell by his contemporaries still seems to be the correct one.

An examination of the decisions rendered by Campbell shows that in every case he and White were in agreement. But after June, 1811, Campbell sat in on none of the cases heard by the Court.¹⁰ The reason for this seems to be that he could not resist his interests in affairs in Washington. Indeed, he never lost interest in national affairs while he was a member of the Tennessee Supreme Court; and as early as the summer of 1809 he was corresponding with his friends in Washington, requesting information on the subject of relations with England. Among his correspondents was his old friend Joseph B. Varnum, who had been Speaker of the House of Representatives while Campbell was chairman of the Ways and Means Committee. On October 1, 1811, when the mem-

(December, 1944), 291-313, and the same author's "Hugh Lawson White, Frontiersman, Lawyer, and Judge," East Tennessee Historical Society's *Publications*, XIX (1947), 3-24.

⁸Minute Book, Tennessee Supreme Court of Errors and Appeals, 1810-1811, *passim*.

⁹*Reports of the Supreme Court of Tennessee, 1847-1848*, xviii.

¹⁰Minute Book, Tennessee Supreme Court of Errors and Appeals, 1810-1811. Original decisions, written by Campbell and White, are on deposit in the Tennessee State Library and Archives.

bers of the State Legislature elected Campbell to fill the vacancy in the United States Senate caused by the resignation of Tennessee's Senator Jenkins Whiteside, he eagerly accepted the position.¹¹ His service as a member of the Tennessee Supreme Court was indeed little more than an interlude in his long career in national politics. His place on the Supreme Court was taken by John Overton who, like Hugh Lawson White, was a close follower of Governor Blount. Within two months after Campbell left the Court, it was set up as an equity court, sitting permanently at Knoxville; and at the same time ten circuit courts were established in the state to replace the five circuit courts which had been erected in 1809.¹² Campbell hurried back to Washington, which, in view of his interests and inclinations for war with England, he should not have left in the first place.

If Campbell had remained in Congress after the repeal of the embargo in the spring of 1809, he very likely would have continued to advocate strong actions against England. If that had been his course, instead of retiring from the House and sitting on the Tennessee Court of Errors and Appeals during 1810-1811, he would have been in the House upon the arrival there of Henry Clay, John C. Calhoun, and the other well-known "warhawks."¹³ Since Campbell had been a "warhawk" before the arrival of Clay and Calhoun in the House, he undoubtedly would have been very intimately associated with them if he had remained in their branch of Congress. He might even have become something of an "elder statesman" to the younger "warhawks," and he thus might have obtained a larger place in American history. From a reputation standpoint, he was absent from Washington, 1809-1811, at a very unfortunate time. More than that, he has received scant attention for his patriotic actions in the years

¹¹Memorandum, written by Campbell, October 2, 1811 (in possession of Mrs. Susan M. Brown).

¹²Nashville *Democratic Clarion and Tennessee Gazette*, October 8, November 19, 26, 1811.

¹³Channing, *The Jeffersonian System*, 263-265, 267, discusses the "war party," including Clay, Calhoun, Felix Grundy, Peter B. Porter, William Lowndes, and Langdon Cheves. See also Mayo, *Henry Clay*, 385-426.

1805-1809. It should be stated, however, that he paved the way, in Tennessee and perhaps elsewhere in the West, for the younger "warhawks." When he stepped aside temporarily in 1809, the young "warhawks", magnificent patriotic specimens of the contemporary nationalist and expansionist movements that they were, moved spectacularly and lastingly into the main stream of American history. What they had to say in 1810-1812, it should be reiterated, Campbell had said many times already. And when Campbell returned to Congress, he merely resumed his earlier stand against England.

On November 4, 1811, Campbell began his duties as senator from Tennessee;¹⁴ and he remained in that office until February, 1814, when he resigned in order to become Secretary of the Treasury in President James Madison's cabinet. It has been seen that during his time in the lower House, 1803-1809, he became a leading advocate of the embargo and of military and naval preparations for possible war with England and France. When the embargo was repealed just before he quit the House in 1809, he favored war with England rather than the imposition of a non-intercourse act in place of the embargo, and said so emphatically. Upon his return to Washington as a senator his main desire seems to have been war with England. He was without any question a "warhawk." In 1811-1812, as in 1805-1809, he fulfills all the requirements of a definition of a "warhawk;" and he was recognized as such by Representatives Clay and Calhoun.¹⁵

During his first session in the Senate, however, Campbell largely confined his activities to routine matters. Although in his speeches on war questions he again stated definitely that he favored war, and he voted for the laws which first made Clay and Calhoun famous, his continued support of war was shown best by the correspondence that he carried on with

¹⁴*Annals*, 12 Cong., 1 Sess. (1811-1812), 9. For a comparison of Campbell with the other senators from his state, see Kenneth McKellar, *Tennessee Senators As Seen by One of Their Successors* (Kingsport, Tennessee, 1942).

¹⁵Mayo, *Henry Clay*, 402. Two other Senators who cooperated with the "warhawks" of the House of Representatives during 1811-1812 were William H. Crawford of Georgia and George M. Bibb of Kentucky. *Ibid.*

friends in Tennessee. Many of his letters were printed in local newspapers, and nearly every one of them demonstrates that he was a "warhawk." He was outspoken for annexation of English territory in North America. Similar to other "warhawks," such active young men as Henry Clay and John C. Calhoun who had stormed into Washington and gained control of the national House of Representatives, he wanted Canada and said so. Unlike some of the other expansionists he publicly and privately seems to have confined his imperialistic inclinations to Canada.¹⁶ No available material indicates that he showed any great desire to take over Florida from Spain, although earlier in his career, particularly in a *Circular Letter* of April, 1805, to the people of Tennessee, he had been quite interested in acquiring Florida. That he did not give voice to this ambition, an urge that was common among his Western colleagues and Southern cohorts during the War of 1812 era, is surprising and difficult to understand.¹⁷

When Campbell entered the Senate, he believed that war would certainly result between the United States and England unless England ceased both her depredations against American shipping and her "impressment" of American sailors. Writing a *Circular Letter* of November 16, 1811, which was published in the leading newspapers of Tennessee, he said, ". . . The prospect before us, so far as regards Great

¹⁶Julius W. Pratt, *Expansionists of 1812* (New York, 1925), contains a general discussion of the "warhawks" and, in part, an account of their interest in Florida. Pratt neglects Campbell, however. See also "The Approach of War," in Allen Johnson, *Union and Democracy* (Boston, 1915), 197-210. Burt, *The United States, Great Britain and British North America*, 207-316, especially 305-310, differs emphatically from Pratt as to both the causes of the War of 1812 and the significance of the "warhawks." Pratt emphasized the "warhawks," whereas Burt believes that the United States went to war because British vessels attacked American vessels and that the United States fought to defend its honor. Canada, Burt says, was not especially desired by the United States, but was attacked as a way of "getting back" at Great Britain. It is interesting to note that Campbell fits in nicely to the thesis of both Pratt and Burt. An interesting study of the causes of the War of 1812 is W. H. Goodman, "The Origins of the War of 1812: A Survey of Changing Interpretations," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXVIII (September, 1941), 171-186, which appeared about a year after Burt's study.

¹⁷An excellent discussion of the efforts of agents of President Madison to usurp Spanish control in Florida during the War of 1812 may be found in Patrick, *Florida Fiasco*.

Britain, seems evidently to darken, and the storm to be rapidly approaching; whether it can be passed away without our feeling its utmost fury, is yet uncertain; some of its ravages in the capture and condemnation of our vessels we already feel; and there appears at present no reason to expect that their outrages will be voluntarily discontinued—what will be done cannot at present be ascertained—But that some firm and energetic measure calculated to vindicate the rights and maintain the honor of the nation, ought to be adopted and preserved in, cannot, it would seem be even doubted by any friend of this country.”¹⁸

As early as the first month following his return to Congress Campbell complained bitterly that Congress was failing to adopt energetic measures against England. As he remonstrated near the close of November, 1811, to both the editor of a Nashville newspaper and Willie Blount, governor of Tennessee, Congress had been in session for nearly four weeks, “and not one measure of importance respecting our foreign affairs had been brought forward by either house!!” He hoped, albeit impatiently, that Congress would soon take such actions “as may arouse the nation from the state of apathy (though not without some doubt) into which, it appears to have been lulled by the nerveless measures that have been adopted and relied upon, for some years past.”¹⁹ To Governor Blount, Campbell wrote: “— The present crisis seems to require, and imperiously demand, that decisive measures of energy and vigor should be adopted—we have suffered national degradation too long, and indured insult and injury with too much patience.” He hoped that the American military force would be increased to at least twenty thousand troops, that additional state militia would be organized, and that all American merchant vessels would be armed. If such policies were adopted, he maintained, they would either allow the United States to exercise her rights as a neutral, “or afford the nation an opportunity to do itself justice; and relieve

¹⁸Nashville *Democratic Clarion and Tennessee Gazette*, December 9, 1811.

¹⁹Campbell to Editor, November 29, 1811, in *ibid.*, December 24, 1811.

[*sic*] its lost character, by washing off the stains on its honor in the blood of its enemies."²⁰

"Warhawking" before the Senate on December 11, Campbell again expressed his desire for war preparations. He proposed a resolution providing that a bounty as well as a land warrant for 160 acres of western land be given to persons enlisting in the United States army for a period of five years. His resolution was rejected by a vote of 23 to 10, however.²¹ A week later he made his only long speech during the first session of the Twelfth Congress, and argued as usual for war with England. He favored not only war, but also an immediate attack on Canada. He disapproved of the military bill providing for the enlistment of 25,000 troops, on which he happened to be speaking, however, claiming that it called for the enlistment of too many men. A force of only 10,000 men was needed for the capture of Canada, he said. The United States should not raise too many troops at the beginning of the Canadian invasion: "It would be the worst policy we could pursue, and prove most injurious to the nation, to call into actual service, at the commencement of a war, a force so greatly beyond what the occasion demanded, and thereby waste your strength and exhaust your resources before the crisis arrived that might require the exertion of all your energies." To raise and discipline 25,000 men would, moreover, consume more time than "ought to elapse before you act, if you are determined to act with effect." Ten thousand men could be raised quickly and Canada could be attacked unexpectedly and successfully, he concluded. After England entered the war, the United States could raise additional troops.²²

Although he opposed the military bill in debate, Campbell voted for it on December 20, when it passed the Senate by an

²⁰Campbell to Blount, November 29, 1811, in *Wilson's Knoxville Gazette*, December 16, 1811.

²¹*Annals*, 12 Cong. 1 Sess. (1811-1812), 34, 35.

²²See *ibid.*, 68-84, particularly page 83.

overwhelming majority.²³ Writing to Andrew Jackson a few days later, he explained,

. . . We are raising *large regular* armies—and making preparation for *war*—and talking a great deal about *taking Canada*, etc.—. . . From the present appearances it is extremely difficult to perceive, how war can be avoided, without degrading the national character, still lower, than it now is— . . . There is no doubt, at present, but the regular military force will be increased, to 25,000 men, or more—authority will also be given to raise volunteers—call out the militia, etc.—probably merchant vessels will be permitted to arm—and our present naval force fitted out & prepared for service—but what will be the final result of all this cannot, at present, be determined—many, who vote for armies—a navy, & all other expenditures that are proposed will vote against war with England!!—time alone will develop *their views*—²⁴

After passing the military bill, Congress turned seriously to the problem of supplying the new troops. Campbell took no part in the debates on this question, but he voted for the various expenditures as they were authorized.²⁵ On February 24, 1812, he brought Governor Blount up to date on the actions of Congress. He now thought that public opinion had been aroused to such an extent over English impressment of American seamen that war was inevitable. The only way war could be averted, he said, was repeal of the English Orders-in-Council, and this was unlikely. When war came, Congress must raise money for its conduct. The matter of taxes, Campbell continued, would require "mature consideration however unpalatable & will no doubt be duly attended to by those guardians of the people's rights in both houses who are instructed by the people to guard their interests as well as to protect their rights with sentiments of great weight."²⁶ In this ponderous phrase, Campbell named what was to be one of the most trying problems of the War of 1812: how to finance it. At no time during the winter of 1811-1812 and the early spring of 1812 did he shrink from war, however.

²³*Ibid.*, 85. This bill was approved by the House and signed by President Madison on January 11, 1812. *Ibid.*, 2234.

²⁴Campbell to Jackson, December 24, 1811, in Jackson Papers.

²⁵See, for example, *Annals*, 12 Cong., 1 Sess. (1811-1812), 99.

²⁶Campbell to Blount, February 24, 1812, in Harriet Turner Deposit.

On April 1, a confidential message, proposing a general embargo on all vessels in American ports, was received in the Senate from President Madison. On the same day Campbell, whose sentiments on embargo questions had long been known, was named chairman of a select committee to report on the desirability of adopting the President's proposal. Before he could render a report, which surely would have been favorable, a House bill of a similar nature was received in the Senate, and on April 3 was accepted by the latter body.²⁷ A week later Campbell reported to Jackson that the embargo had been laid. The embargo, he said, was a precursor of war; and since England was not expected to change her basic policies toward American shipping, the United States should continue to prepare for war. Concerning war, he added, ". . . It appears unavoidable—unless indeed there shall be found among us too many whose *fears & apprehensions* will overcome their resolution & judgment; and make them shrink from the contest, when the last *step* is to be taken, the *important question of war*, . . . —whether this will be the case or not, time alone can tell—For the honor of our country— & of human nature, I should hope it would not!"²⁸ On April 18, Campbell repeated, in a letter to the editor of the Nashville *Democratic Clarion and Tennessee Gazette*, his belief that the embargo would result in war: it was "altogether uncertain what hour or moment, some of our towns may feel the effects of British *treachery*—or *British vengeance*." The President, in preparation for possible attack, had been authorized to raise 15,000 of the 25,000 troops provided for in the recent military bill.²⁹

From the date of the passage of the embargo act until the first week in June, Campbell took a minor role in the debates in the Senate. During this period, however, he received a

²⁷Richardson, ed., *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, I, 499; *Annals*, 12 Cong., 1 Sess. (1811-1812), 187, 190, 2264. The embargo was approved by Madison on April 4.

²⁸Campbell to Jackson, April 10, 1812, in Jackson Papers.

²⁹Campbell to Editor, April 18, 1812, in Nashville *Democratic Clarion and Tennessee Gazette*, May 6, 1812.

signal compliment from the editor of the Nashville *Democratic Clarion and Tennessee Gazette*. Vice-President George Clinton had died; and Campbell's hometown newspaper recommended that either he or Henry Clay be nominated as the next vice-president. Referring to Campbell, the editor wrote: "Possessing a correct judgment, great powers of reasoning, indefatigably attentive to the duties of his station, and never stooping for a moment from a high and dignified sense of his country's rights, he is indisputably one of the pillars of the republic. His abilities and incorruptible integrity has made him the organ of the administration; the confidence of which he enjoys in the most ample manner."³⁰ Nothing came of this recommendation, of course, but to be recommended for the position and to be put in the same class with Henry Clay by a western newspaper was a noteworthy compliment at this particular time.³¹

The declaration of war with England was the chief topic of debate in the Senate during the first two weeks of June, 1812.³² The discussion occurred behind closed doors, and no material has been located which refers to Campbell's speeches. It was his nature to talk, however. Since he had wanted to take a strong stand against England for several years, it is highly probable that he was now one of the outspoken advocates of war; and it would be incomprehensible to reach any other conclusion. On June 17, when the Senate voted for war, he voted in the affirmative.³³ About the middle of June he had informed the editor of the Nashville *Demo-*

³⁰*Ibid.*, May 12, 1812.

³¹See Mayo, *Henry Clay*, 385-525, and Glyndon G. Van Deusen, *The Life of Henry Clay* (Boston, 1937), 77-88, for discussions of Clay's spectacular rise to a position of national importance in the period November, 1811, to June, 1812.

³²For surveys of the steps leading to war, see Johnson, *Union and Democracy*, 197-210, and Sydney Howard Gay, *James Madison* (Boston, 1884), 301-320. "Opposing claims" of the United States and Great Britain, which led to war in 1812, are discussed in Wood, *The War with the United States*, 1-19. See also Samuel Flagg Bemis, *John Quincy Adams and the Foundations of American Foreign Policy* (New York, 1949), and Richard Beale Davis, ed., *Jeffersonian America, Notes on the United States of America Collected in the Years 1805-6-7 and 11-12 by Sir Augustus John Foster, Bart.* (San Marino, California, 1954).

³³*Annals*, 12 Cong., 1 Sess. (1811-1812), 297, 2323. See also Beirne, *The War of 1812*, pp. 87-95.

cratic Clarion and Tennessee Gazette that Congress was ready to consider a declaration of war. On the day after war was declared, he wrote Governor Blount that Congress had had no choice on the matter. The United States, he said, either had to fight or submit ignominiously to England. As for himself, he was happy that war had at last been chosen rather than submission.³⁴

Campbell played a very important part—although an ineffective part, along with other members of Congress—in trying to finance the War of 1812. And he was involved in the consideration of war finances from the very beginning of the war. On June 19, a bill authorizing the issuance of \$5,000,000 in treasury notes was referred to a committee of which he was named chairman. Three days later he reported the bill, and after a minor debate it was accepted by the Senate. The lower House also approved the bill, and on July 1 it was signed by President Madison. On June 24, Campbell was placed on another committee to work out a bill laying additional duties on all goods brought into the United States, and six days later, upon his committee's recommendation, the bill was approved by the Senate. On July 6, he joined a majority of the Senate in sanctioning a Government loan bill of \$11,000,000. Other war measures were rushed through on the same day, and Congress adjourned.³⁵

Although active in war-time financial legislation, one of Campbell's important contributions to the war effort, ineffective as it was—and here he should be praised or censured equally with the other members of Congress—had to do with

³⁴Campbell to Editor, June ?, 1812, in Nashville *Democratic Clarion and Tennessee Gazette*, June 30, 1812; Campbell to Blount, June 18, 1812, in *Wilson's Knoxville Gazette*, July 13, 1812. A. W. Putnam, *History of Middle Tennessee; or, Life and Times of Gen. James Robertson* (Nashville, 1859), 597, says of Tennessee's attitude toward the declaration of war: "Nowhere was there a more general approval of the declaration, and a greater readiness to engage in its prosecution. It pervaded all classes."

³⁵*Annals*, 12 Cong., 1 Sess. (1811-1812), 298, 301, 303, 306, 311, 320, 326, 1509, 1510, 1586, 2338. For accounts of John C. Calhoun's role in the activities of the House of Representatives in the period November, 1811-June, 1812, see Charles M. Wiltse, *John C. Calhoun, Nationalist, 1782-1828* (Indianapolis, 1944), 53-66, and Margaret L. Coit, *John C. Calhoun, American Patriot* (Boston, 1950), 67-81.

military legislation. In November, 1812, when Congress reconvened, he was named to the chairmanship of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs; and during the session he centered his interests around army matters. He had a long way to go in promoting an effective army, and he—and Congress—did not go far enough. Immediately after his appointment to the military committee, he inquired of the Department of War about the number of troops then under arms in the United States. The answer to this vital question, according to the War Department on November 14, was that only a few troops were armed. The War Department recognized that the whole army was badly in need of reorganization, and expressed the hope that Congress would aid in revitalizing the army.³⁶

For the next month Campbell and his committee considered a bill for reorganizing the army; and not being particularly familiar with military affairs Campbell sought advice from the Secretary of War, and to the best of his ability he tried consistently to execute the wishes of the War Department. On December 21, 1812, for example, he inquired if any changes should be made in the staff organization of the army. He was particularly interested, he said, in improving the quarter-master corps, for he believed that soldiers would fight better if well-supplied. He also wished, he added, to make all subordinates in the army accountable to some higher officer. Also, unless more discipline were instilled into the army, he believed that the United States would lose the war. Moreover, he hoped that the War Department would suggest some more effective law respecting volunteers, "so as to render the force to be obtained from that source, more certain as well as more efficient." He also asked to what extent the regular army should be increased.³⁷

³⁶War Department to Campbell, November 14, 1812, Reports to Congress, No. 1, War Office, February 3, 1803-April 13, 1818, in Adjutant General's Office, Old Files Division (Archives of the Department of War). Cited hereafter as A. G. O., O. F. D.

³⁷Campbell to Department of War, December 21, 1812, in A. G. O., O. R. D.

Two days later the War Department informed Campbell that "the exposed parts of our Country claim a primary attention." Boston, Newport, New York, Philadelphia, Norfolk, and Charleston particularly needed protection. Troops should be sent immediately to Georgia to protect that state against both the English and the Creek Indians. New Orleans, Natchitoches, Detroit, and Malden were other places in need of additional defenses. It was believed, said the War Department, that all of these localities could be defended by 9,350 regular troops. The remaining men in service, numbering 16,000, should be employed for offensive war against Niagara, Kingston, Montreal, Halifax, and lower Canada. In order to oppose the British troops in America, estimated at 19,000 to 21,000 men, the United States ought to have a force of at least 20,000 regulars and 10,000 reserves. Positive victory could be assured by raising 20,000 troops "in addition to the legal complement of 35,000." Thus it was necessary to raise a total of 55,000 troops to win the war.³⁸

Campbell was also told that the only desirable method of obtaining the necessary troops was for the President to commission officers and give them authority to raise regiments. Every soldier who enlisted in the army should be given a bounty of at least \$40, and for every recruit brought in an officer should receive \$5. The war should be brought to a speedy close, for "If a lingering war is maintained, the annual disbursements will be enormous. Economy requires that it be brought to a termination with the least possible delay. If a strong army is led to the field early in the spring, the British power on this continent, must sink before it; . . . But if delay takes place, reinforcements may be expected, and the war will be prolonged."³⁹ This lengthy letter indicated something of the plans of the War Department. It was concerned primarily with defense and recruitment, saying nothing whatever about the staff organization, the quartermaster corps, and discipline in the army. The War Department, therefore, did not answer

³⁸War Department to Campbell, December 23, 1812, in A. G. O., O. F. D.

³⁹*Ibid.*

the questions raised by Campbell's letter of December 21. Campbell had sensed some of the real weaknesses in the army, but he got no satisfaction from the War Department as to how to solve those weaknesses at this time.

During the early months of 1813, Campbell introduced in the Senate several bills which he believed would improve conditions in the army. Some of them carried out the wishes of the Department of War in connection with recruitment; some were his own ideas. In early January, he reported a bill providing for the reorganization of the army which, after intermittent debate, was accepted on January 13. According to his proposal, one additional major was to be appointed in each army regiment of light dragoons, light artillery, infantry, and rifles. A third lieutenant and one sergeant were to be added to each troop or company. After February 1, 1813, every person enlisting as an ordinary soldier for the duration of the war was to receive an advance in pay of \$24 and a bounty of 160 acres of land. Commissioned officers were to receive \$4 for each soldier they recruited. At any time, members of state militia would be permitted to transfer to the regular army.⁴⁰

On January 19, Campbell reported a bill calling for the recruitment of additional soldiers, and after four days debate this bill was also accepted. It provided that the President could raise as many as 20 regiments of infantry, to be enlisted for one year. No person under the age of 21 years was to be accepted for military service; commissioned officers were to receive \$2 for each soldier recruited; each recruit was to be given a bounty of \$16; dependents of persons killed in service were to be placed on the pension list of the United States, and receive half the deceased man's pay for a period of five years. When these new policies became effective, February 1, 1813, volunteer troops were to be treated as regular troops, under

⁴⁰*Annals*, 12 Cong., 2 Sess. (1812-1813), 40, 45, 1318-1319. This bill was accepted by the House of Representatives and on January 20 was approved by President Madison.

the sole authority of the United States. No control over the volunteers was to be vested in the states.⁴¹

On February 11, Campbell placed before the Senate a matter in which he was deeply interested: "*Resolved*, That the Secretary for the Department of War be, and hereby is, directed to prepare and report to the Senate such system of military discipline for the army and militia of the United States as may be approved by him, and which in his opinion, ought to receive the sanction of law,"⁴² The Senate failed to accept the resolution, however, and it was not brought up for discussion again. But Campbell went ahead with other legislation. One of his bills, presented on February 23 and approved a few days later, provided for appointment by the President of a superintendent-general and six assistant superintendents, who, under the immediate direction of the Secretary of War, were to supervise the purchase and distribution of all army supplies. On February 24, Campbell reported a bill which, in general, provided for the appointment of additional high ranking army officers. In particular, it expanded the activities of the quartermaster corps and commissary department, and it aimed at a better distribution of supplies among common soldiers, in whom Campbell was much concerned.⁴³ Even if Campbell knew very little about technical aspects of military affairs, all of his suggestions seem to be sound. His main failing, perhaps, and here again he was quite typical of his contemporaries, was that he did not go far enough. Whatever conclusion one might reach about the conduct of a war, however, he should remember one thing: legislating a war and winning a war on the battle field are two quite different aspects of the same endeavor. This thought seems to be peculiarly applicable to the War of 1812, a war which never had the support of all Americans. Campbell was thoroughly aware of this latter fact; and it is

⁴¹*Ibid.*, 54, 63, 1322-1325. As approved by Madison, each regiment was to contain 10 companies which, in addition to commissioned and non-commissioned officers, was to consist of 90 privates.

⁴²*Ibid.*, 81.

⁴³*Ibid.*, 101, 104, 111, 117, 1346-1351.

probable that he thought that he went to the limit in sponsoring war-time legislation during January and February of 1813.

On March 3, the second session of the Twelfth Congress adjourned *sine die*. During the session, Campbell worked on legislation with which he was unfamiliar, but he showed judgment in requesting recommendations from the War Department, and most bills which he wrote or introduced complied with those recommendations. And that the various military bills which he helped put through the Senate met with Madison's approval was indicated in a presidential message to Congress, when a special session was called in May, 1813: "The events of the campaign in upper Canada, so far as they are known to us, furnish matter of congratulation, and show that, under a wise organization and efficient direction, the Army is destined to a glory not less brilliant than that which already encircles the Navy. . . . The provisions last made for filling the ranks, and enlarging the staff of the Army, have had the best effects."⁴⁴

During the special session, from May 24 until August 2, Campbell's place as chairman of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs was taken by his fellow senator from Tennessee, Joseph Anderson. Campbell was named to the chairmanship of the Committee on Foreign Relations. During the session he proposed only one bill worthy of note, however, and that failed to pass. On June 28, he asked the Senate to declare it treason for any person to carry on trade with England or English possessions; if any American citizen was found guilty of such act he was to be imprisoned for two years and fined not less than \$500. His bill was introduced, passed two readings, but was never brought up again for consideration. Later in the session, however, a bill containing the same provisions passed the House of Representatives. This bill was sent to the Senate on July 23, and referred to Campbell's committee. He reported it the next day, and for

⁴⁴Richardson, ed., *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, I, 526-530.

three days it was debated, but was rejected by a vote of 18 to 16.⁴⁵ This defeat undoubtedly stung Campbell: it was a continuation of his unsuccessful effort of 1807-1809 to enforce compliance with the embargo. And as will be remembered, he once fought a duel as a result of a debate over this very subject.

On August 2, shortly after the extra session of Congress adjourned, Campbell followed his standard practice of writing a *Circular Letter* for publication in the newspapers of Tennessee. In the *Letter*, he appealed to the people of Tennessee for their continued support of the war. The United States had been forced reluctantly into the war, he said, but “. . . Our national rights had been for so long a time, so repeatedly violated with impunity by Great Britain, that she appears to have concluded we were prepared to indure any privations, however great, and bear any insults however degrading to our honor, rather than resort to war for redress; and the conduct of some of our citizens in certain sections of the Union was calculated to confirm her in this opinion.” As for England, he added, “For more than twenty years she has been in the constant practice of disregarding the commercial rights of its [the United States’] citizens, whenever prompted thereto by interest or ambition. . . . Her objects in regard to us have been to check the progress of commercial enterprise, and prevent a rival in the commerce of the world from acquiring strength and arriving at maturity.” War with England was the only honorable course the United States could follow, “and posterity will be astonished, that a nation of freemen should so long have endured such unprovoked and flagrant violations of their rights.”⁴⁶

Continuing his *Letter*, Campbell reported that Congress had imposed a direct tax, which he hoped Tennesseans would support. Turning to a consideration of the conduct of the war, he wrote briefly and to the point, “In consequence of not having had the command of the lakes Erie and Ontario, the

⁴⁵*Annals*, 13 Cong., 1 Sess. (1813), 36, 37, 99-102.

⁴⁶Nashville *Democratic Clarion and Tennessee Gazette*, September 21, 1813.

operation of our armies in those quarters have been for some time suspended. Having now obtained the superiority on those lakes, the war will again be prosecuted with vigor, and there is good ground to expect with success. . . . There is at present little ground to expect a speedy termination to the war. . . . Engaged on our part, in a just cause, nothing is necessary to ensure success but a proper management and skillful direction of the resources and physical force of our country, which are fully competent to effect all the objects of the war. . . ." Campbell concluded, "The people of America can never consent to abandon any one of their just rights, or have their destinies directed or controlled by the ambitious views of another power; few among them will be found so dastardly, the great majority will on so important an occasion divest themselves of party and local considerations and combine their united efforts to maintain inviolate the integrity of the nation, the liberty of the citizens, and the honor of the nation."⁴⁷ Thus spoke a "warhawk."

By December, 1813, when Campbell returned to Washington for the second session of the Thirteenth Congress, he was quite definitely one of the leaders of the Administration party in the Senate. On his arrival he was named to Anderson's place on the Committee on Military Affairs, on which he had previously been very active at the beginning of the war.⁴⁸ During the session he followed the same practice that he had begun during his earlier service on the committee: he usually asked for and received the approval of the Department of War before recommending a military bill to the Senate. On December 31, for example, he inquired of John Armstrong, Secretary of War, concerning the number of troops in the army, where they were stationed, and for what terms of service they were enlisted. He was aware, he said, of the deplorable condition of the army, but hoped that provisions could be made for filling the depleted ranks. He was positive that some method could be devised to induce persons to enlist, but

⁴⁷*Ibid.*

⁴⁸*Annals*, 13 Cong., 2 Sess. (1813-1814), 545.

believed that unless an attractive inducement were offered shortly the United States might lose the war.⁴⁹ Four days later, Armstrong submitted two considerations to Campbell. First, the Secretary insisted, fourteen regiments of infantry should be immediately enlisted for terms of five years, or for the duration of the war; second, three regiments of riflemen should be raised for the same period of service.⁵⁰ Campbell at once prepared and presented bills to the Senate in keeping with Armstrong's recommendations. On January 10, he reported a measure authorizing the enlistment of the fourteen infantry regiments, and two days later the proposal was accepted by the Senate. The bill went to the House, where it was adopted, and on January 28 it was approved by Madison. Shortly afterward a bill embodying the second of Armstrong's suggestions was also passed by Congress.⁵¹

Campbell also became interested in setting up some new regulations for the recruitment of state militia,⁵² but he left the Senate before he could draw up and present a bill containing his wishes in this respect. The last bill which he reported in the Senate, before resigning on February 12 in order to become Secretary of the Treasury, provided for an increase in the bounty paid to men enlisting in the army. His proposal was introduced on January 12, debated intermittently for about a week, and recommitted, and seemed to be lost until a few days later when a military bill was received from the House of Representatives. The House bill was referred to Campbell's committee, and in rendering a report on it shortly afterward, he added to it an amendment providing for payment of a bounty of \$100 to every man enlisting in the army after February 1, 1814. A recruit was to receive \$25 upon enlistment, \$25 when he began his service, and \$50 when he was mustered out of the army. The amendment was accepted by the Senate, but when the amended mili-

⁴⁹Campbell to Armstrong, December 31, 1813, in A. G. O., O. R. D.

⁵⁰Armstrong to Campbell, January 4, 1814, in A. G. O., O. F. D.

⁵¹*Annals*, 13 Cong., 2 Sess. (1813-1814), 279, 571, 573, 2791.

⁵²Campbell to Armstrong, January 20, 1814, in A. G. O., O. R. D.

tary bill was returned to the lower House, it was rejected. The Senate insisted that Campbell's amendment be included in the bill, however, and requested a conference with the House. A conference committee, on which Campbell sat, was appointed and drew up a measure acceptable to both Houses. As finally passed, the military bill called for the payment of a bounty of \$124 to every able bodied man who enlisted in the army. On enlistment he was to receive \$50; on entering the army, an additional \$50; and when discharged, \$24.⁵³ After the passage of the bill, Campbell hoped, as he wrote in a letter to General Jackson, that the United States would have no more trouble in filling the ranks of the army.⁵⁴ The fact that his expectations were not fulfilled is quite another matter.

Although historians' interpretations as to the importance of the "warhawks" have, perhaps, changed in recent years, Campbell fits quite precisely into the definition of a "warhawk." Moreover, there is still little doubt that the "warhawks" had a great deal to do with the encouraging the United States to go to war with England in 1812, for in their varying ways they supported the major reasons for going to war: impressment, attacks on American shipping, the English naval policies, outspoken militarism, nationalism, and the urge to acquire Canada and Florida. Campbell wanted war for all of these reasons. He favored strong action against England as early as 1805; he demonstrated his urge for war and "defense of American honor" while he was chairman of Ways and Means in the House and while chairman of both the committee on Military Affairs and Foreign Relations in the Senate; and

⁵³*Annals*, 13 Cong., 2 Sess. (1813-1814), 573-594, 599, 601, 629, 2789-2790. See *ibid.*, 12 Cong., 1 Sess. (1811-1812), 34-35, for a bounty bill introduced by Campbell on December 11, 1811, which was rejected.

⁵⁴Campbell to Jackson, January 28, 1814, in Campbell Papers (in possession of Mrs. Susan M. Brown).

he supported war preparations, voted for war, and sponsored war-time legislation. He also exerted some influence in the development of a "war spirit" in Tennessee and elsewhere in the West. Campbell was not only one of the more active "warhawks," but, as has been mentioned, he was one of the first "warhawks."

Chapter VI

IN THE CABINET

Shortly after the outbreak of the War of 1812, mediation between the United States and England was offered by Russia. This overture was accepted by President Madison, who chose as special envoys to Russia Albert Gallatin, Secretary of the Treasury, and James A. Bayard, an outstanding statesman from Delaware. Gallatin tried to resign from his post in the Treasury, but opponents of the Administration in the Senate refused to accept his resignation or to confirm his appointment as special envoy. Despite the Senate's action, he left the United States for St. Petersburg in May, 1813, thus creating a peculiar situation in the Treasury Department and in his diplomatic mission. In effect, he remained Secretary *de jure*, although he was envoy *de facto*.¹

At Gallatin's departure for Europe, it was rumored that Richard Rush, Comptroller-General of the Treasury, would become Gallatin's successor. However, Madison appointed William Jones, Secretary of the Navy, to act as Secretary of the Treasury during Gallatin's absence. In February, 1814, Gallatin, who was still in Europe, was appointed as one of a group of commissioners to proceed to Ghent, where the commission was to negotiate a peace treaty with England. Gallatin's position in the cabinet having been vacant for six months, he was now eligible under the law for appointment to his new position, and the Senate acquiesced in his nomination.² When Gallatin's nomination was confirmed, Madison had to appoint a permanent Secretary of the Treasury.

¹Nashville *Democratic Clarion and Tennessee Gazette*, June 8, 1813; Samuel Perkins, *A History of the Political and Military Events of the Late War between the United States and Great Britain* (New Haven, 1825), 274. Gallatin was sent to Russia at his own request. Among his motives for going was: "financial collapse and domestic treason were becoming mere questions of time." Adams, *The Life of Albert Gallatin*, 478.

²Nashville *Democratic Clarion and Tennessee Gazette*, May 11, 1813; Perkins, *War between the United States and Great Britain*, 274-277; Albert Bushnell Hart, *Formation of the Union* (New York, 1895), 237; Frank A. Updyke, *The Diplomacy of the War of 1812* (Baltimore, 1915), 168-169.

The President's first choice for the position as Secretary was Alexander James Dallas of Pennsylvania. Dallas was one of Gallatin's closer friends; he was an old Republican leader; he had served as federal district-attorney in his state; and he was a lawyer of exceptional ability. In February, 1814, he commanded little support in Pennsylvania, however, and had he been nominated to the post, his nomination would probably have been blocked by the two senators from his home state, Michael Lieb and Abner Lacock, who were opponents of Madison.³ These facts were known to the President, who, realizing that enough bickering had already occurred in the Senate over his nominations, offered the position to Richard Rush, a staunch Jeffersonian. Rush was probably the most eligible person available for the secretaryship, but he refused the position. When Rush turned down the place in the cabinet, Madison offered it to Campbell, who accepted it. Campbell thus became the second man from west of the mountains to serve in a president's cabinet, the first cabinet officer from that region being John Breckinridge of Kentucky, who in 1805-1807 was Thomas Jefferson's attorney-general.⁴

Certain historians have been extremely harsh in their criticism of Madison for his selection of Campbell as Secretary of the Treasury. Albert Bushnell Hart, for example, in writing of Gallatin's appointment to the peace commission, states: "The immediate effect was to take Gallatin out of the Treasury, and he was followed for a few months by Secretary Campbell, to whose incompetence the financial impotence of the war is partly due." Another opinion, which is also open to question, is the one offered by Henry Adams in his *History of the United States*, the oft-quoted account of the United States during the interval between the presidencies of Henry Adams' forebears, John Adams and John Quincy Adams. Secretary

³President Madison was warned that the Senate would not confirm Dallas' nomination. Wiltse, *John C. Calhoun, Nationalist*, 83. See also William M. Meigs, "Pennsylvania Politics Early in This Century," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, XVII (1893), 462-490.

⁴Adams, *History of the United States*, VII, 396-397; Harrison, "John Breckinridge: Western Statesman," *loc. cit.*, 149; Kendrick Charles Babcock, *The Rise of American Nationality, 1811-1819* (New York, 1906), 216.

Campbell, says Henry Adams, "brought no strength to the Administration, and rather weakened its character among capitalists." The *Dictionary of American Biography* sums up Campbell's actions in the Treasury Department as follows, and is much closer to the truth: "He served a brief and ineffective administration and brought no improvement to the badly organized finances of the government."⁵

As a matter of fact, Madison's appointment of Campbell to his cabinet was not altogether unwarranted. The Tennessean was surely not the best qualified man for the position, but next to Dallas and Rush, he was one of the more logical persons to fill the vacancy. He had been chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee during two sessions of Congress, and in that capacity palpably acquired some beneficial experiences with government finances. He was a Westerner, and it would seem that in view of western support of both Madison and the war with England, his region deserved representation in the President's cabinet. After entering the Senate in 1811, he was unquestionably one of the most dependable supporters of the Madison Administration in Congress; and when William H. Crawford, of Georgia, left the Senate in 1813 to go to Paris as American minister, Campbell was recognized, in some circles, as the Administration leader in the Senate. After the outbreak of the war with England he served as chairman of two of the more important Senate committees: military affairs and foreign affairs. From the standpoint of practical politics and experience, Campbell, it would seem, was a logical cabinet appointee. Ex-President Jefferson, himself, wrote to Campbell that ". . . it is always a gratification to me to see the public offices confided to those I know to come into them with a singleness of view to the public good."⁶

⁵Hart, *Formation of the Union*, 237; Adams, *History of the United States*, VII, 397; Hamer, "George Washington Campbell," *loc. cit.*, 452. See also Wiltse, *John C. Calhoun, Nationalist*, 88-89.

⁶Jefferson to Campbell, May 18, 1814, in *Jefferson Papers*. See also Adams, *History of the United States*, VII, 398.

Campbell's party associates and sympathizers believed that he was thoroughly capable of handling his new duties. Their chief regret, indeed, seems to have been that he was leaving the Senate. Perhaps a letter from Nathaniel Macon to Joseph H. Nicholson, a North Carolinian to a Marylander, best indicates their feelings about Campbell's appointment to the cabinet: "G. W. Campbell is nominated Secretary of the Treasury. He will be much missed in the Senate," lamented Macon. "Indeed," he added, "I am at a loss to guess, who now will be the defender of the administration in the Senate: Crawford sent to France, Campbell to the Treasury. I do not complain that Campbell is unfit [thus indicating that criticism of the appointment existed] & indeed if the choice of the secretary must be made out of Cong. I do not know that a better could be made, really it seems as if Congress was to be robbed by the executive of its best friends and protectors. . . . Campbell, removed must make the majority less certain in the Senate."⁷

An even more interesting contemporary comment about Campbell's appointment to the cabinet was made by Mrs. Margaret Bayard Smith, the wife of Samuel Harrison Smith, who had been editor (1800-1810) of the Washington *National Intelligencer* and who in 1813 had become United States Commissioner of Revenue. Writing a letter of February 13, 1814, to a close friend, Mrs. Smith made the following significant and thought-provoking statement in regard to Campbell: "8 years ago G. W. Campbell addressed Eliza Bell [?], who rejected him. She was very ambitious and he then an obscure member of Congress. Mr. S. [Samuel Harrison Smith] then said, 'If it is greatness she desires, she will regret her refusal, for I predict that G. W. C. will attain great eminence, and one day may be our President.' This he said from an intimate knowledge of his talents. He has ever since silently but surely been adding to his influence and usefulness and has for some

⁷Macon to Nicholson, February 12, 1814, in "Letters Bearing on the War of 1812," *The John P. Branch Historical Papers of Randolph-Macon College* (Ashland, Virginia, June, 1902), 143-144.

time been looked up to as the head of the republican party in the senate.”⁸

Madison's own reasons for appointing Campbell as his Secretary of the Treasury are explained in the following letter, written a number of years after the event; and internal evidence leads to the conclusion that Madison remembered exceedingly well the conditions under which he selected Campbell.

Mr. Campbell was the only member of the Cabinet from the West whose claims to representation in it were not unworthy of attention under existing circumstances. It was not, indeed, the quarter most likely to furnish fiscal qualifications [here Madison seems to be referring to the West rather than to Campbell], but it is certain he had turned his thoughts that way whilst in public office more than appears to have been generally known. He was a man, moreover, of sound sense, of pure integrity, and of great application. He held the office at a period when the difficulties were of a sort scarcely manageable by the ablest hands, and *when the ablest hands were least willing to encounter them*. [By italicizing this remark, Madison may have been referring to Gallatin, as well as Dallas and Rush]. It happened, also, that soon after he entered his task his ill health commenced, and continued to increase till it compelled him to leave the Department.⁹

Madison thus does not seem to have regretted his selection of Campbell, and, indeed, came to his defense many years afterwards. The truth of the matter, of Campbell's service as Secretary of the Treasury, is that he was a victim of circumstances beyond his control.

Campbell entered the cabinet when monetary matters were very trying. Financial conditions, which were prosperous during most of Jefferson's administration, due in part to the Virginian's various economy measures, were unsettled by the war. In most of the decade before the war the currency had been fairly stable, the country was expanding, and trade was increasing. Moreover, the United States Bank, whose charter expired in 1811, had served as a stabilizing force on the economy of the entire country. New England, in particu-

⁸Mrs. Margaret Bayard Smith, *Forty Years of Washington Society*, edited by Gaillard Hunt (London, 1906), 93.

⁹Madison to Henry Lee, February ?, 1827, in *Letters and Other Writings of James Madison*, 4 vols. (Philadelphia, 1867), III, 593.

lar, had prospered. During the early months of the war with England, Treasury affairs had not seemed troublesome. In his fourth message, presented to Congress on November 12, 1812, Madison reported that government receipts had increased appreciably, from \$13,500,000 to \$16,500,000, since November of the preceding year. Madison was not optimistic,¹⁰ however, and his outlook proved to be the correct one. During the winter of 1812-1813, military and naval expenditures increased so rapidly that they required the issuance of large amounts of government bonds and treasury notes.¹¹ On February 8, 1813, for example, Congress authorized a government loan of \$16,000,000, but the loan was only taken up after the Government agreed to sell its bonds for eighty-eight dollars on the hundred! On April 1, President Madison appealed to the people of the country to purchase bonds which would be issued in the future. He also sent a special message to Congress, urging "the necessity of providing more adequately for the future supplies of the Treasury."¹² But the Government—the President, the Treasury Department under Gallatin, and Congress—failed to establish a broad tax system, relying instead (as had been the case during the American Revolution) on its credit. Heavy public expenditures—in peace or in war—also were fundamentally opposed by Jeffersonians, and this attitude of mind and habit worked a definite hardship on the financial conduct of the War of 1812.¹³

There is no question that the United States Government was pressed for hard money and credit during the war. The following table showing expenditures of the army and navy

¹⁰Gaillard Hunt, ed., *The Writings of James Madison*, 9 vols. (New York, 1900-1910), VIII, 229; Babcock, *The Rise of American Nationality*, 216-218.

¹¹During the War of 1812, Congress authorized treasury notes to the amount of \$30,500,000; of this sum, \$10,600,000 was outstanding on January 1, 1815. William J. Shultz and M. R. Caine, *Financial Development of the United States* (New York, 1937), 145.

¹²*Annals*, 13 Cong., 1 Sess. (1813), 128; Hunt, ed., *The Writings of James Madison*, VIII, 247-248.

¹³For an excellent statement of Jeffersonian economy, see Mayo, *Henry Clay*, 284-286.

from 1812 through 1815, for example, is indicative of the abnormal financial demands caused by the war:¹⁴

EXPENDITURES OF THE ARMY AND NAVY, 1812-1815

Year	Amount	Purpose
1812	\$ 9,512,106.49	payment of soldiers, recruiting, bounties, clothing, equipment
	100,000.00	arming and equipping the militia
	1,600,000.00	payment of the militia
	460,000.00	payment of volunteers
	3,854,490.40	payment of sailors, recruiting, repairs to vessels, ordnance
	370,000.00	fortifying ports and harbors
	106,000.00	construction on six 74-gun ships, completing navy yards, docks, and wharves
1813	17,931,669.70	payment of soldiers, recruiting, bounties, clothing, equipment
	120,000.00	arming and equipping the militia
	400,000.00	payment of the militia
	540,000.00	payment of volunteers
	6,358,100.10	payment of sailors, recruiting, repairs to vessels, ordnance
	761,046.30	fortifying ports and harbors
	90,000.00	construction on six 74-gun ships, completing navy yards, docks, and wharves
1814	561,046.30	transferred from army appropriation to navy
	19,802,906.86	payment of soldiers, recruiting, bounties, clothing, equipment
	480,000.00	arming and equipping the militia
	7,311,290.60	payment of sailors, recruiting, repairs to vessels, ordnance
1815	200,000.00	coast defense
	14,889,016.71	payment of soldiers, recruiting, bounties, clothing, equipment
	320,000.00	arming and equipping the militia
	8,660,000.25	payment of sailors, recruiting, repairs to vessels, ordnance
	\$94,437,673.71	total

At the very time when the government needed money so desperately, as shown by the above table of army and navy expenditures, few people were willing to buy bonds. Not only were taxes unpopular, but people refused to back the war and the government by purchasing bonds. The end result, somewhat reminiscent of the American Revolution period, was

¹⁴An Account of the Receipts & Expenditures of the United States for the Year 1812, pp. 73-76; for the Year 1813, pp. 73-75; for the Year 1814, p. 106; for the Year 1815, pp. 115-116 (Division of Bookkeeping and Warrants, Treasury Department, Washington). See also Shultz and Caine, *Financial Development of the United States*, 139.

financial turmoil as far as the government was concerned. Available cash for the purchase of bonds practically disappeared by the year 1814, and it is likely that all ready money in the hands of strong supporters of the war was used for that purpose shortly after the war began. By the year 1814 many people lost confidence in the Administration, however, and most of the persons who could afford to buy government securities were bankers, successful business men, and others, who for the most part lived in the northeastern section of the country, which was the section where the war was most unpopular. When those investors bought government paper they struck hard bargains; when they purchased bonds they seem not to have been motivated by patriotism. The Government, sorely pressed for ready cash, was compelled to meet their terms. It would seem that they rather than the Treasury Department and the various Secretaries of the Treasury should be blamed, at least in part, for the "financial impotence of the war."¹⁵

Despite the empty condition of the Treasury in February, 1814, when he began his duties in that Department, Campbell took over his new office with a show of confidence; and with the good wishes of friends in Tennessee.¹⁶ In January, shortly before leaving office, acting Secretary Jones estimated the revenue receipts of the Treasury for the year 1814 at \$10,100,000. Campbell, in a private letter of March 24 to John W. Eppes, his old friend who was now chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, increased the estimate to \$10,950,000. In this letter, which was read to the members of the House on March 28, Campbell recommended

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 143, states in regard to the Government's credit by the year 1814: "The financiers of the country regarded the Federal Government as helpless prey to be despoiled for their personal profit." See Channing, *The Jeffersonian System*, 265-267, for a discussion of Gallatin's difficulties as Secretary of the Treasury. Wiltse, *John C. Calhoun, Nationalist*, 67-91, describes New England's obstruction to the war effort.

¹⁶When informed of Campbell's appointment to the Department of the Treasury, a Tennessee newspaper stated: "We entertain no doubt but his conduct will secure the approbation of all good citizens, and be a blessing to the country." Nashville *Democratic Clarion and Tennessee Gazette*, March 8, 1814.

that Congress raise the tariff rates on all goods coming into the United States from the West Indies and that all direct taxes be strictly enforced. He also hoped that the recent indirect tax levied on the sale of whiskey would add to the Government's revenue. Large amounts of money were needed for operating the Government and conducting the war, he said, but they could be raised from the sale of bonds.¹⁷

On March 3, Congress authorized a loan of \$25,000,000, and the bill was approved by Madison on March 24. The bonds were to bear an interest rate of 6% and were to be redeemed not later than December 31, 1826.¹⁸ On April 2, shortly after entering the cabinet, Campbell announced that bonds to the amount of \$10,000,000 would be open for public purchase until May 2. He announced, in the leading newspapers of the country, that no amount of stock less than \$25,000 would be sold; the yearly interest rate of 6% would be paid in quarterly installments until the stocks matured in December, 1826. Campbell also wrote to various bankers throughout the United States requesting them to subscribe to the bond issue.¹⁹ On May 4, after some harrowing experiences for a man in his position, he informed President Madison that all the bonds had been taken up.²⁰

Campbell advertised for sale only \$10,000,000 worth of the \$25,000,000 bond issue which Congress had authorized on March 3. Even so, he had great difficulty in completing the sale of the smaller amount, and in selling the bonds he was quite entirely at the mercy of the buyers.²¹ The whole issue

¹⁷*Niles' Weekly Register*, VI (April 6, 1814), 105-106. This reliance upon bonds was a common attitude among the members of Jefferson's party.

¹⁸*Annals*, 13 Cong., 2 Sess. (1813-1814), 1798, 2811, 2812.

¹⁹This was the same method as followed by Gallatin when he was Secretary of the Treasury. For example, in March, 1812, Gallatin advertised a loan of \$11,000,000. Books were opened to the public on May 1, and subscriptions were received at sixteen banks located in Portsmouth, New Hampshire; Boston; Providence; Hartford; New York City; Philadelphia; Baltimore; Washington; Richmond; and Charleston. The subscriptions were handled by the banks. *Niles' Weekly Register*, II (April 11, 1812), 91.

²⁰Campbell to Madison, May 4, 1814, in Hunt, ed., *The Writings of James Madison*, VIII, 276; "Annual Report of the Secretary of the Treasury, September 26, 1814," in *State Papers*, 13 Cong., 3 Sess. (1814-1815), 18.

²¹See, for example, Morison, *Harrison Gray Otis*, II, 66-67, 71-77.

of \$10,000,000 was sold at eighty-eight dollars on the hundred, plus six percent interest. The terms of this loan were identical with the bond issue of \$16,000,000 of February, 1813, which had been floated while Albert Gallatin was Secretary of the Treasury. Even on these low terms, however, only one-half of the new \$10,000,000 issue was sold by May 1, when the sale was supposed to close. On that day Campbell received the following letter from Jacob Barker, a prominent banker of New York City: "Respected Friend: I will loan the Government of the United States five Million dollars, receiving one hundred dollars six percent stock for each eighty-eight dollars paid." Patriotism had taken a holiday. The next day, because of circumstances beyond his control, Campbell was forced to notify the shrewd and grasping New Yorker that his terms were acceptable.²²

Barker was not the only person to gouge the Government in the course of the \$10,000,000 bond issue, although some subscribers were surely patriotic in their efforts to aid the Government at this time. Of the forty-three persons or firms purchasing the bonds issued in this particular case, all except seven lived or operated businesses in Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, or Washington, D. C. Two purchases were made by persons living in Virginia, four in South Carolina, and one in Kentucky. No one in Tennessee bought any of the bonds. Indeed, in reply to a letter addressed to the president of the Nashville bank, Campbell was informed rather curtly that the bank could not afford to take up any of the bonds, "for few have money to spare, and those who have can employ it more advantageously."²³ The following table lists the purchasers of the bonds:²⁴

²²Finance Report, 1790-1814, Secretary of the Treasury, 536 (Division of Bookkeeping and Warrants, Treasury Department).

²³John Dickson to Campbell, May 4, 1814, in Campbell Papers (Library of Congress).

²⁴"Annual Report of the Secretary of the Treasury, September 26, 1814," *loc. cit.*, 19-20.

TEN MILLION DOLLAR BOND ISSUE OF THE UNITED
STATES GOVERNMENT, ADVERTISED ON APRIL 4, 1814

Purchaser	Residence of Purchaser	Amount Purchased
Pelleg Tallman	Bath, Maine	\$ 25,000
Levi Cutler	Portland, Maine	94,000
John Woodman	Portland, Maine	50,000
Henry S. Langdon	Portsmouth, New Hampshire	40,000
John W. Treadwell	Salem, Massachusetts	416,156
Thomas Perkins	Salem, Massachusetts	25,000
William Gray	Boston, Massachusetts	197,000
Samuel Dana	Boston, Massachusetts	25,000
Jesse Putman	Boston, Massachusetts	67,900
Amos Binney	Boston, Massachusetts	35,000
Nathan Waterman	Providence, Rhode Island	35,300
James D. Wolf	Bristol, Rhode Island	100,000
John R. Sherman	Newport, Rhode Island	35,000
Elisha Tracy	Norwich, Connecticut	30,000
Michael Shephard	Hartford, Connecticut	25,000
Abraham Bishop	New Haven, Connecticut	25,000
John Taylor	Albany, New York	150,000
Alanson Douglas	Troy, New York	50,000
Smith and Nicoll	New York City	80,000
Harman Hendricks	New York City	42,000
G. B. Vroom	New York City	500,000
Samuel Flewelling	New York City	257,300
Jacob Barker	New York City	5,000,000
Whitehead Fish	New York City	250,000
Guy Bryan	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	50,000
Thomas Newman	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	108,000
Samuel Carswell	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	28,000
Paul Beck	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	50,000
William Patterson, Sons	Baltimore, Maryland	50,000
George T. Dunbar	Baltimore, Maryland	191,000
James Cox	Baltimore, Maryland	71,900
Dennis A. Smith	Baltimore, Maryland	200,000
Samuel Eliot, Jr.	Washington, D. C.	100,000
Alexander Kerr	Washington, D. C.	33,000
William Jones (for Navy and privateer pension fund)	Washington, D. C.	200,000
William Whann	Washington, D. C.	432,500
Anthony C. Cazenove	Alexandria, Virginia	30,000
Robert C. Jennings	Richmond, Virginia	176,000
Charles B. Cochran	Charleston, South Carolina	250,000
David Alexander	Charleston, South Carolina	60,000
John Lukens	Charleston, South Carolina	70,000
Thomas W. Bacot	Charleston, South Carolina	115,000
James Taylor	Newport, Kentucky	25,000
		<hr/> \$9,985,056

This table is very interesting and enlightening for both its contents and its omissions. Bonds were obviously hard to sell in the year 1814. The issue was completed only because of the purchase of half of the bonds by one purchaser, at the close of

the sale. New Englanders, who opposed the war, were willing to invest, at a high rate of interest, in a government undertaking of which they disapproved violently. Southerners failed as a group to support the bond issue. Westerners were the loudest supporters of the war, but did not buy bonds. All of the purchasers, despite the defeatism which prevailed during the war, must have thought that they were investing in a cause which would benefit them financially.

On May 7, three days after Campbell notified Madison of the completion of the loan the President wrote him that "The lenders ought to have afforded us better terms, yet under all circumstances of the moment, the loan has been obtained on terms equal to public expectation, and will have a favorable influence on our affairs. . . . Having secured a livelihood of our war for a few months, we shall have time to deliberate on further experiment, and with prospect of receiving from abroad information that may enlighten our calculations."²⁵ Madison was of course expecting favorable news from his peace commissioners in Europe, but as negotiations were not begun at Ghent until August 8,²⁶ his immediate financial difficulties were helped in no way. There was little hope for a quick suspension of hostilities with England. The deplorable condition of Government finances continued, Congress was unwilling to pay for the war through collection of extremely high taxes, and the President and Campbell began preparations for another loan.

Campbell wrote friends, capitalists, and bankers, asking them to buy up the next bond issue when it was placed on the market. One of his letters, written to General Jackson, who at the time was in Nashville, warrants particular notice: "The loan of ten millions, we have been able to effect, on as favorable terms, as could, under existing circumstances, have been expected, notwithstanding all the efforts of the opposition to prevent it.— . . . The terms are favorable to the lenders; and

²⁵Madison to Campbell, May 7, 1814, in Hunt, ed., *The Writings of James Madison*, VIII, 276-277.

²⁶*American State Papers, Foreign Affairs*, III, 707.

it is somewhat surprising that Banks in the Western States do not take more of the loans & become holders of more of the stock of the U. States—They could lend as much money at least as is expended within the States in which they are respectively, . . . ” On a more personal note, Campbell added, “The Nashville Branch would consult its own interest & that of the State, by loaning to the government at least \$100,000 — It is next to certain little or none of it would be taken out of the State, but paid in discharging the expenditures of the late campaign; I notice these circumstances to you, knowing you feel interested in the successful operation of the Bank, and will give these remarks that weight only to which they are entitled; ” The letter concluded, “being myself also some what interested in the Bank, it will not be supposed, I would suggest to it the propriety of taking a step, by which, I had reason to believe, it would finally be injured ”²⁷

Although both Madison and Campbell were fully aware of the Treasury's strained condition, they refused, because of the unfavorable terms on which the sales of a new bond issue would have to be concluded, to place any more bonds on the market for several months after the \$10,000,000 debacle. They began preparations for a new loan, but decided to wait as long as possible before floating it.²⁸ Unforeseen events were to prove, however, that their timing was very bad.

In May, Campbell turned his thoughts toward a European loan. When this information became known, John J. Astor, the entrepreneur and fur magnate of New York City, offered to handle the bond issue. But Campbell refused to give Astor power to sell the bonds, reporting instead to Madison that no action would be taken on the matter until he learned what price was being received for American bonds on the European market. Campbell also informed James Monroe, Secretary of State, that Astor and Company could probably float

²⁷Campbell to Jackson, May 15, 1814, in Jackson Papers.

²⁸Madison to Campbell, May 25, 1814, in Hunt, ed., *The Writings of James Madison*, III, 278-279.

a loan in Europe "for five, or even ten millions, on the terms of the last loan, giving them credit for the payments."²⁹ In effect this would be no better than a loan at home.³⁰ On May 24, Astor wrote Monroe that he had consulted with his partners and that they would handle a European loan for the United States Government, if a safe method could be arranged. But no action was taken on Astor's offer, and when in the same week it was learned that United States bonds were selling at par in Europe, the Government dropped all consideration of the financier's offer.³¹ Astor, as far as is known, made no further offers. The Government, on its part, failed to carry through with its efforts to float a loan in Europe, and abandoned the project.³²

The depressed financial condition of the Treasury continued during the late spring and early summer of 1814. The country was indeed not impoverished, but the Government was unable to tap its resources at home. Several of the New England states, which were soon to furnish delegates to the Hartford Convention, continued to refuse to support the war and the Madison administration financially.³³ Since much of the capital of the country was centered in that region, Campbell therefore reached an impasse, or a situation with which he was unable to cope. Many people refused to pay taxes; and in spite of the great wealth of the country the Government was practically bankrupt. Still no encouraging news came from the peace commissioners in Europe, and it seemed that the war and the commissioners' sojourn at Ghent would drag on indefinitely. Despairingly, on June 27, at a cabinet meet-

²⁹Campbell to James Monroe, May 13, 1814, in James Monroe Papers (Library of Congress).

³⁰Monroe to Madison, May 14, 1814, in Stanislaus Murray Hamilton, ed., *The Writings of James Monroe*, 7 vols. (New York, 1898-1903), VI, 281, 282.

³¹Astor to Monroe, May 24, 1814, in Monroe Papers; *Niles' Weekly Register*, VI (May 28, 1814), 210. For the role of Astor, David Parrish, and Stephen Girard in connection with the \$16,000,000 loan floated by Gallatin in February, 1813, see Theodore J. Grayson, *Leaders and Periods of American Finance* (New York, 1932), 106-108.

³²Madison to Campbell, May 25, 1814, in Campbell Papers (in possession of Mrs. Susan M. Brown).

³³See Morison, *Maritime History of Massachusetts*, 209-212.

ing the decision was reached that Madison should authorize a treaty with England even if the treaty remained silent on the question of British impressment of American seamen.³⁴ Since impressment had been the ostensible reason (at least the propaganda approach to why the United States should fight) for declaring war in the first place, the cabinet's action indicates that the Government was at last agreed that the war should be given up as a bad job, perhaps ill conceived and certainly poorly conducted.

During the first week of July, 1814, financial affairs came to a crisis. No money was left in the Treasury. Congress was not in session, and the Government had to float another loan. On July 3, Campbell called on Madison to confer about the loan's issuance. At the interview the President showed Campbell a paper he had written for publication in the *Washington National Intelligencer*. In the paper the President expressed unofficially his sentiments about the deplorable condition of the Treasury, and begged the public to support the Administration and the war by subscribing to the loan which was being planned. Campbell was shocked at the President's approach to the problem. On reading the paper, he advised strongly that such a depressing picture would surely defeat any loan attempted by the Government, and on his suggestion Madison agreed not to publish his entreaty. At the interview it was decided to float a loan of \$6,000,000 of the \$25,000,000 issue authorized by Congress on March 24, 1814. Carrying out this plan, Campbell advertised a Government loan of \$6,000,000 on July 25. The bonds would remain on the market until August 22, and would bear an interest rate of six per cent, redeemable on December 31, 1826.³⁵

But this loan met with even less success than the earlier one floated by Campbell, and only a few sales were made by August 22, the day on which the issue was closed to the pub-

³⁴Hunt, ed., *The Writings of James Madison*, III, 281.

³⁵Madison to Unknown [probably Monroe], July 3, 1814, in Hamilton, ed., *The Writings of James Monroe*, V, 284-287. See also Finance Report, 1790-1814, Secretary of the Treasury, 538, 539; and "Annual Report of the Secretary of the Treasury, September 26, 1814," *loc. cit.*, 21, 22.

lic. Those people who had money to invest again played a waiting game. The classic example was that of Dennis A. Smith, a banker of Baltimore, who, on the day after the sale closed, offered to purchase \$1,800,000 worth of the bonds. Smith was a sharp trader indeed: according to his letter to Campbell, he was willing to pay only eighty dollars on the hundred and also expected to receive the usual six percent interest.³⁶ Patriotism was dead as far as he was concerned. Campbell refused Smith's outrageous terms, but on August 24 an event occurred which left him little choice: Washington was captured by British troops. The enemy rushed into the capital, burned the White House and several public buildings, and then evacuated the city. The war effort thereby reached its lowest ebb, and the American people were filled with despair.³⁷ From Nashville, Tennessee, for example, it was reported: "With mingled emotions of shame and indignation we announce to our readers, that the British have taken the city of Washington."³⁸

The day after the capture of the capital, Madison and his cabinet returned to the city, from which they had fled. Financial affairs of the Government, the chief concern of Campbell, now reached their lowest state during the war. Specie payment was suspended entirely; and in this development the Government was the greatest sufferer, since it had large amounts of treasury notes deposited in the numerous banks about the country which closed their doors. Army contractors, security holders, and soldiers and sailors went unpaid. The Treasury was bankrupt, and had to borrow small sums of money to operate on from day to day.³⁹ On August 31,⁴⁰ Campbell accepted Dennis A. Smith's offer of the loan of

³⁶Smith to Campbell, August 22, 1814, in "Annual Report of the Secretary of the Treasury, September 26, 1814," *loc. cit.*, 22.

³⁷Beirne, *The War of 1812*, pp. 264-288; Perkins, *War between the United States and Great Britain*, 316-320; Edward Channing, *A History of the United States*, 6 vols. (New York, 1905-1925), IV, 507-510.

³⁸Nashville *Democratic Clarion and Tennessee Gazette*, September 13, 1814.

³⁹See, for example, Davis Rich Dewey, *Financial History of the United States* (New York, 1902), 145; and Coit, *John C. Calhoun*, 94.

⁴⁰Campbell to Smith, August 31, 1814, in "Annual Report of the Secretary of the Treasury, September 26, 1814," *loc. cit.*, 22-23.

\$1,800,000. At such a low cost it was believed that the original bond issue of \$6,000,000 would be taken up quickly. Such favorable rates on government bonds, from the purchaser's standpoint, had not been offered since the establishment of the United States. On the same day on which Campbell agreed to Smith's terms, he re-opened the \$6,000,000 loan of July 25, which up to the last of August had been a miserable failure.

Despite the new favorable terms on which bonds could be bought, few purchasers came forward to aid their government or to benefit from the Government's excellent terms to bond holders. Campbell, therefore, was unable to carry through the new loan. By the middle of September, only \$2,930,000, or less than half, of the entire issue was taken up, the few sales being concluded on the same exorbitant terms as the one with Smith of Baltimore.⁴¹ Again the purchasers struck hard bargains. Eight of the seventeen persons who finally subscribed to the loan were the same who speculated in the bond issue of April, 1814, and again the purchasers for the most part resided in the northeastern section of the country. One purchase was made by George M. Deaderick, a banker of Nashville, Tennessee. When Campbell began his first loan in April he did so with the intention of selling no less than \$25,000 worth of bonds to each purchaser, but on this second loan he accepted any order for bonds regardless of the amount. The persons who took up the loan are listed in the following table:⁴²

SIX MILLION DOLLAR BOND ISSUE OF THE UNITED STATES
GOVERNMENT, ADVERTISED ON JULY 25 AND AUGUST 31, 1814

Purchaser	Residence of Purchaser	Amount Purchased
William Rice	Portsmouth, New Hampshire	\$ 43,000
Henry S. Langdon	Portsmouth, New Hampshire	35,000
Amasa Stetson	Boston, Massachusetts	37,000
Jesse Putman	Boston, Massachusetts	15,000
Nathan Waterman	Providence, Rhode Island	10,000

⁴¹Finance Report, 1790-1814, Secretary of the Treasury, 540-541.

⁴²"Annual Report of the Secretary of the Treasury, September 26, 1814," *loc. cit.*, 23.

John S. Sherman	Newport, Rhode Island	25,000
John Savage	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	480,000
William W. Smith	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	200,000
William Patterson, Sons	Baltimore, Maryland	140,000
Dennis A. Smith	Baltimore, Maryland	1,800,000
George T. Dunbar	Baltimore, Maryland	120,000
James L. Hawkins	Baltimore, Maryland	15,000
John P. Van Ness and others	Washington, D. C.	201,000
David English	Georgetown, D. C.	35,000
Clement Smith	Georgetown, D. C.	37,000
John Lukens	Charleston, South Carolina	47,300
George M. Deaderick	Nashville, Tennessee	50,000
		<hr/> \$3,340,300

On his return to Washington after the British capture and evacuation of the city, President Madison called a special session of Congress. Among his reasons for the special session, as he put the case, was for Congress to insure "any inadequacy in the existing provisions for the wants of the Treasury . . . as that no delay might happen in providing for the result of the negotiations on foot with Great Britain [at Ghent]." ⁴³ But when the Congressmen gathered in Washington in September, they were a bewildered and disillusioned lot. Confidence in the Government had all but disappeared, perhaps more so than at any time in United States history. There was very little hope of organizing an efficient army at this late date. Party and sectional strife had helped to disrupt the efforts of the Administration, including the cabinet officers, toward a successful conclusion of the war. And in his annual message to Congress, on September 20, Madison particularly emphasized the needs of the Treasury: "The moneys received into the Treasury during the nine months ending the 30th of June last amounted to \$32,000,000, of which near eleven millions were the proceeds of the public revenue and the remainder derived from loans. The disbursements for public expenditures during the same period exceeded \$32,000,000, and left on the first day of June near \$5,000,000. The demands during the remainder of the present year authorized by Con-

⁴³Hunt, ed., *The Writings of James Madison*, VIII, 306.

gress and the expenses incident to any extension of operatives of war will render it necessary that large sums should be provided to meet them."⁴⁴

Candidly speaking, Campbell failed to come up with recommendations which would solve the problems of his department. A few days after Congress convened, he submitted a very discouraging *Report* on the finances of the Government. Nearly \$20,000,000 had been paid into the Treasury between January and July, 1814, he said, but an additional \$27,000,000 was necessary for use before January, 1815. At least as much money as had been spent in 1814 would be needed during 1815, he added. If the Government was to meet its obligations, Congress had to raise about \$74,000,000. Only the small sum of \$13,822,000 could be considered as being on hand, and this included what was expected to be collected during the remainder of the year. The sum of \$8,200,000 possibly would come in as revenue during the year 1815. Thus, approximately \$22,000,000 was the extent of the Treasury's resources, as he saw the situation. Fifty-two million dollars was needed merely to carry on the ordinary operations of the Government. Some other method than bond issues ought to be followed by the Government in raising money. Since entering the cabinet, he had floated two bond issues, he said, but each issue had been sold at very low rates. He deplored the unwillingness of a wealthy people to come to the aid of its government, and recommended that new and extraordinary methods should be adopted to raise money. He hoped to raise about \$10,000,000 by the issuance of treasury notes. From all sources, however, he could see only about \$24,000,000 of the \$74,000,000 needed. He was quite discouraged at the outlook, he concluded, and hoped that Congress would adopt methods to remedy the evils of the currency and the suspension of specie payment.⁴⁵

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, III, 310-311. See also Babcock, *The Rise of American Nationality*, 150-167, and Allen Johnson, *Jefferson and His Colleagues* (New Haven, 1921), 230-232, for references to the condition of national affairs at this time.

⁴⁵Finance Report, 1790-1814, Secretary of the Treasury, 523-532; *Niles' Weekly Register*, VII (October 26, 1814), 57-60. In 1830, the Ways and Means Committee of the national House of Representatives estimated that between 1812

Three days after his dismal *Report* to Congress, disheartened and in ill health (probably ulcers, or maybe what is now known as hypertension), Campbell resigned his post in the cabinet.⁴⁶ His letter of resignation to President Madison was as follows:

The very impaired state of my health and the little probability of its speedy restoration without a change of air, & the benefit of exercise render it indispensable that I should for the present, withdraw from public duties. I have therefore, thought it my duty, in order to prevent public interests from certain inconveniences thereby, to resign my appointment as Secretary of the Treasury; which accordingly, I hereby do.

At this eventful crisis in our affairs nothing but necessity imposed by causes not within my own control would have induced me to take this step. . . . The regret I felt on the accession is diminished by the consideration that little difficulty will be experienced in filling the vacancy with advantage to the public service.—I cannot, however dissolve the tie by which I have been connected with your administration, without tendering to you, Sir, my warmest acknowledgments for the distinguished confidence & friendship with which you have pleased to honor me; and expressing my ardent toleration for your individual happiness & prosperity. . . .⁴⁷

Campbell probably had more difficulty composing this letter than any letter he ever wrote. He had gone high up the political ladder, but now he stepped down. On September 27, Madison accepted the resignation:

I have received your letter of the 26th resigning your office of Secretary of the Treasury. The considerations both personal & public which induced my desire that you should become a member of the Executive family, being undiminished, I cannot but deeply react the want which separates you from it, and more especially the imperious cause which imposed such an ultimatum. With my sincerest wishes that your valuable health may be soon & completely re-established I pray you to accept my great esteem and my friendly respects.⁴⁸

A few days after quitting his office, Campbell left Washington for Sulphur Springs, Virginia, where he rested for sev-

and 1816 the Federal Government contracted loans of over \$80,000,000, receiving only \$34,000,000 as measured in specie. Dewey, *Financial History of the United States*, 134; Harvey E. Fisk, *Our Public Debt, An Historical Sketch with a Description of United States Securities* (New York, 1919), 14-19.

⁴⁶Perkins, *War between the United States and Great Britain*, 460-462.

⁴⁷Campbell to Madison, September 26, 1814, in Campbell Papers (in possession of Mrs. Susan M. Brown); Nashville *Clarion and Tennessee Gazette*, October 21, 1817.

⁴⁸Madison to Campbell, September 27, 1814, in *ibid*.

eral weeks; and from the latter place he went to Nashville, where he arrived during the first week of November.⁴⁹

Immediately after Campbell's resignation as Secretary of the Treasury, President Madison again requested Alexander James Dallas to accept the position. Dallas agreed, his name was sent to the Senate, and now even his political enemies in Pennsylvania were willing to give him a try in the Treasury Department. While his appointment was being considered, one of his long-time opponents, Senator Lacock, is supposed to have remarked to Madison's private secretary: "Tell Dr. Madison that we are now willing to submit to his Philadelphia lawyer for the head of the Treasury. The public patient is so very sick that we must swallow anything, however nauseous."⁵⁰ The nomination was approved; on October 14, Dallas entered office.⁵¹ Twenty years later, *Niles National Register* of Baltimore, while promoting George Mifflin Dallas, the son of Alexander James Dallas, for the office of Vice-president, had the following interesting comment to make about the trying circumstances under which the elder Dallas became Secretary of the Treasury. It is noteworthy, and perhaps a travesty on the study of American history, that *Niles Register* overlooked the fact that Campbell had ever been a cabinet officer, but it is in this way, in part, that certain men have become lost in our history: "No one who was then [1814] upon the stage of action will ever forget the circumstances under which this appointment of the elder Dallas was made. It was the darkest period of our history, immediately after the sacking of Washington, when treason was holding its convocations at noonday [the Hartford Convention], when the credit of the country was annihilated, its flag trampled on, and all but hope and honor seemed buried under the ashes of

⁴⁹Campbell to Madison, December 5, 1814, in Campbell Papers (in possession of Mrs. Susan M. Brown).

⁵⁰Quoted in Adams, *History of the United States*, VIII, 242-243.

⁵¹Hunt, ed., *The Writings of James Madison*, III, 347. In the interval between Campbell's resignation and October 14, Samuel H. Harrison, the United States Commissioner of Revenue, acted as Secretary. "Letter from the Secretary of the Treasury to Congress, October 15, 1814," in *State Papers*, 13 Cong., 3 Sess. (1814-1815), 1.

the capitol. [Dallas was] called unexpectedly to a post, from which the most experienced financier of the time [Albert Gallatin] had retired in dismay, . . . ”⁵²

After Campbell left the capital, discussion of his services while Secretary of the Treasury went on apace. His activities were criticized harshly and bitterly by opponents of the Administration, and attempts were made to blame him entirely for the Treasury's deplorable condition. Representative George Bradbury of Massachusetts, for example, in attacking Campbell, deprecatingly remarked, “. . . that if the individuals who took the last loans had been permitted to devise a bill for their particular advantage, they could not have drawn one to suit them better.”⁵³ Campbell, on the other hand, was not without defenders. In reply to Bradbury's invective, Representative Joseph H. Hawkins of Kentucky made a statement, which, considering the evidence, seems more nearly correct: “The government had gone on relying on the public credit alone to support its loans, until terms on which they could be obtained had fallen from par to 88, from 88 to 80. The government had been compelled to have money and had bought it as low as they could. As to the terms of the ten million loan, on which so much has been said it was only an adaption of the loan by Mr. Campbell to the terms of which Mr. Gallatin had, without censure, obtained the sixteen million dollar loan, . . . ; so that the blame thrown on him was imputable not to the terms of the late loan, but to the inability of the government to borrow. . . . ”⁵⁴ Hawkins thus stated a fact that can not be denied.⁵⁵ Also worthy of note in

⁵²Niles' *National Register*, LXVI (June 22, 1844), 263. For discussions of Dallas' appointment, his difficulties as Secretary of the Treasury, and his plans to improve finances, see Babcock, *The Rise of American Nationality*, 220-224; Dewey, *Financial History of the United States*, 132-137; and Perkins, *War between the United States and Great Britain*, 458-470.

⁵³Nashville *Democratic Clarion and Tennessee Gazette*, December 24, 1814.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*

⁵⁵The actions of Harrison Gray Otis serves as an example of the Federalists' attitude toward the war loans during the War of 1812. Otis, according to one of his friends, refused to subscribe to the Government loans of 1814 because “he preferred his party to his Country.” Morison, *Harrison Gray Otis*, II, 76. Otis also was very active in the work of the Hartford Convention. *Ibid.*, 101, 110-116, 125-148.

connection with Campbell's work in the cabinet is a statement made by Samuel Perkins in his historical account of the War of 1812, published in 1825. Perkins, in writing of the Department of the Treasury, concluded knowingly, "This department suffered much by frequent changes of its principal officer [Gallatin, Jones, Campbell, Harrison, Dallas], during a period when uniformity and efficiency of operation were most essential."⁵⁶

Conclusions similar to those of Hawkins and Perkins are those of the historian, James Truslow Adams, in his *New England in the Republic, 1776-1850*, in which he writes of two bond issues floated while Campbell was Secretary of the Treasury. Of the April, 1814, issue of \$10,000,000, Adams concludes: "The loan was largely a failure, New England being responsible for that result, and the position of the government became desperate." Concerning the \$6,000,000 issue of the summer of 1814, Adams says: "In August came the capture and burning of Washington by the British, which sent a panic through the nation. Practically all the banks outside of New England suspended payment, the New England banks alone remaining solvent by means of the specie which they had drained from the rest of the country. New England, however, would afford no help to the administration, and the rest of the states had now become unable to do so."⁵⁷

The fact that the Government was indeed desperately pressed during the War of 1812 is borne out by the excessive amounts of money which it was forced to borrow;⁵⁸ and the

⁵⁶Perkins, *War between the United States and Great Britain*, 462. Madison's cabinet from 1809 to 1817 was indeed an unstable one: 6 Secretaries of the Treasury (including two acting, Jones and Harrison), 4 of War, 4 of Navy, 3 Attorneys General, and 2 of State. See White, *The Jeffersonians*, 80.

⁵⁷Adams, *New England in the Republic*, 285.

⁵⁸One of the ridiculous aspects of the war-time government loan program is mentioned in Paul Studenski and Herman E. Krooss, *Financial History of the United States* (New York, 1952), 78; "[In the interval between Gallatin's and Dallas' terms of office], the business of negotiating loans was turned over to the chief clerk of the Treasury, who was opposed to the war. By refusing to issue stock to subscribers until the full price had been paid, he succeeded for a while in obstructing the progress of the war by discouraging individuals from buying government securities."

following table shows that not Campbell alone, but all of the Secretaries of the Treasury during the War, encountered a problem which was not solved:⁵⁹

MONEY RECEIVED BY THE UNITED STATES TREASURY
THROUGH LOANS, 1812-1815

Year	Amount	Authorization
1812	\$10,002,400.00	On loan of \$11,000,000 by act of March 14, 1812
	2,835,500.00	Treasury notes issued by act of June 30, 1812
1813	182,300.00	On loan of \$11,000,000 by act of March 14, 1812
	16,000,000.00	On loan of \$16,000,000 by act of February 6, 1813
	3,907,335.00	On loan of \$7,500,000 by act of August 2, 1813
	2,164,500.00	Treasury notes issued by act of June 30, 1812
	3,930,000.00	Treasury notes issued by act of February 25, 1813
1814	3,592,665.00	On loan of \$7,500,000 by act of August 2, 1813
	7,935,581.00	On loan of \$10,000,000 by act of March 24, 1814
	3,452,300.00	On loan of \$6,000,000 by act of March 24, 1814
	50,000.00	On loan of \$3,000,000 by act of November 15, 1814
	1,070,000.00	Treasury notes issued by act of February 25, 1813
1815	7,227,280.00	Treasury notes issued by act of March 4, 1814
	50,000.00	On loan of \$11,000,000 by act of March 24, 1814
	1,123,230.12	On loan of \$6,000,000 by act of March 24, 1814
	74,590.75	On loan of \$25,000,000 by act of March 24, 1814
	1,300,000.00	On loan of \$3,000,000 by act of November 15, 1814
	11,934,602.53	On loan of \$18,452,000 by act of March 3, 1815
	2,772,720.00	Treasury notes issued by act of March 4, 1814
	8,318,400.00	Treasury notes issued by act of December 25, 1814
<hr/> \$87,923,404.30		total

⁵⁹An Account of the Receipts & Expenditures of the United States for the Year 1812, pp. 15-16; for the Year 1813, pp. 14-16; for the Year 1814, pp. 10-15; for the Year 1815, pp. 12-15. See also Shultz and Caine, *Financial Development of the United States*, 140.

Although some groups in the country tried to make Campbell a scapegoat for his work in the Treasury Department, he still retained the support of friends in Tennessee. Shortly after he left the Treasury Department, the Attorney-General also resigned. A few days later Joseph Anderson, United States Senator from Tennessee, and a long-time associate of Campbell, recommended his fellow-Tennessean to President Madison as a suitable person to fill the vacancy. Anderson believed that some public figure from the West should be named to the cabinet, and that Campbell was the logical person. Anderson wrote that it was his

... humble opinion, and that of many of our most influential Republican friends—absolutely necessary—that in the present critical times—the attorney general should be taken from our firmest Republican ranks. I have been intimately acquainted with him for about Sixteen years—and in addition to what I have already said—that Mr. Campbell is a man of most exemplary morals, and indefatigable industry—and universally esteemed in the western country—and from the standing which he is held in Congress, to which you are no stranger—I think I might venture to say—from the general estimation, in which I know he is held (by gentlemen of the most respectable Character and standing from different parts of the Union) for his talents, integrity, and sound republicanism—that his appointment to the office of Attorney General—would give to the Republicans—in every section of the Union—the most entire Satisfaction.⁶⁰

Campbell did not become Attorney-General, but his friends continued to promote him in other ways, and after a little more than a year in private life, he returned to Washington, once more as a member of the Senate. Neither his actions while Secretary of the Treasury nor the Government's inability to borrow money while he was in the cabinet caused him to lose popularity among his political friends and supporters, both at home and in Washington.

Jeffersonians hesitated both to issue Treasury certificates and increase taxes, relying instead to a great extent on loans to conduct the Second War with England. But money was tight, and most of the men who had money refused to lend it to the Government by purchasing bonds. James Truslow

⁶⁰Anderson to Madison, November ?, 1814, in James Madison Papers (Library of Congress).

Adams has best described the situation: Government loans failed; New England had money, but would not lend it; and those states who would have loaned money to the Government had none to lend. Secretary of the Treasury Campbell, like his counterparts, was faced, therefore, with a problem that was not solved during the War of 1812.

Chapter VII

MISSION TO RUSSIA

When Campbell resigned from the cabinet and returned to Nashville, he fully intended to remain out of politics for several years.¹ But when Senator Joseph Anderson of Tennessee was appointed Comptroller-General of the federal Department of the Treasury in March, 1815, there began a movement in Tennessee to induce Campbell to accept Anderson's vacated position. Campbell refused the senatorship, however, and explained his reasons as follows to Anderson: "Since my arrival in the State, I have been much solicited by the best characters on both sides of the mountain, to consent to accept that situation; (or indeed any other the state can offer). . . . But I incline, at present, to believe, that independent of all other considerations, it would not, at this time accord with the situation of my private affairs; to which, after being neglected the greater part of 12 years, I ought to pay some attention."²

Campbell did remain out of office, for about fourteen months, and, as will be seen later, he paid close attention to his private affairs, but he continued his insatiable interest in national affairs. To Anderson, for example, he wrote knowingly of the treaty which was concluded between the United States and England. He was certain that less favorable terms would not have been acceptable to the American public, but, at the same time, general conditions in the country had become so deplorable that "it would not have been advisable to continue the war, situated as we were, in order to obtain such as would be considered more so. For brave as our armies, as well as the navy, fought," he said, "yet it is probable the peace was immediately in a great degree produced by the complex-

¹Campbell to John Norvelle, January 19, 1815, in Campbell Papers (Library of Congress).

²Campbell to Anderson, April 22, 1815, in Miscellaneous Correspondence, Received, 1800-1852, Secretary of the Treasury Files (Treasury Department Archives, Washington).

ion of affairs at Vienna.”³ England was too involved in European matters to continue her second-rate war with her former colonies in America. On May 16, in a very suggestive letter to Anderson, Campbell again expressed his views of foreign affairs, particularly about Napoleon’s return to power in France: “The Bourbon dynasty could not long *sustain* themselves in power— . . . they possessed neither talents nor energy to govern a people raised under the guidance of a genius like that of Bonaparte; and would soon by their imbecility as well as corruption sink into contempt. [But], may not the causes that produced our late contest again exist, . . . and if so, may we not again be drawn into the vortex of the League of Nations, & be forced to enter the lists with our former antagonist? I sincerely hope that such may not be the result.”⁴

With such an avid interest in national and foreign affairs, and because of his political ambitions, it is not surprising that Campbell accepted the position as United States Senator, despite his earlier denial of any great interest in holding office, when it was offered to him on October 15 by the Tennessee General Assembly.⁵ He returned to the Senate on December 5, 1815, and continued his services there until April 18, 1818. While in the Senate he was appointed to several important committees, the most influential being the Finance Committee, of which he was chairman. Throughout this, his second term in the Senate, Campbell, as has been seen, was particularly active in sponsoring land legislation favorable to Tennessee. He also was consistent in his support of measures advanced by Presidents Madison and Monroe, who were his close personal friends.⁶ He supported especially the series of nationalistic laws passed by Congress in the period just

³*Ibid.* When it learned that peace with England had been declared, the Nashville *Whig*, March 1, 1815, reported: “An express arrived here on Friday evening last bringing the glorious intelligence that PEACE has been concluded between the United States and Great Britain—ON HONORABLE TERMS.”

⁴Campbell to Anderson, May 16, 1815, in Letters Received, 1815, A. G. O., O. F. D.

⁵Tennessee *Senate Journal*, 1815, pp. 96-97.

⁶While a member of the cabinet Campbell lived in the same house with Monroe, who at the time was Secretary of State. A. C. Clark, *Life and Letters of Dolly Madison* (Washington, 1914), 170.

after the War of 1812, that is, the ones establishing the Second Bank of the United States, a protective tariff, federal grants for internal improvements, and the increase in the size of the army and navy.⁷ On April 11, 1818, his long and continuous support of the administrations of Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe was further rewarded when Monroe offered him the appointment as successor to William Pinkney as American minister to Russia.⁸

In May, 1817, Pinkney had requested his recall from Russia due to the poor health of himself and his family. As the year advanced his health grew worse, and in February, 1818, having obtained his recall, he left St. Petersburg, turning over the American legation to a *chargé d'affaires*, his son Charles.⁹ On April 4, John Quincy Adams, Secretary of State, called on President Monroe to discuss the matter of the elder Pinkney's successor. Monroe wanted to name a man from the West, and first mentioned Generals Andrew Jackson and William H. Harrison as suitable nominees; but stated that neither had claims to the position equal to those of Campbell. Massachusetts, the President said, had its share of the recent appointments to diplomatic positions; New York, he believed, had no prominent public character other than Rufus King, who had had his quota of foreign missions; Pennsylvania already had two missions; and he did not wish, he said, to appoint a Virginian. He concluded that the new minister should come either from the South or the West, and his first choice for the job was Campbell, who should be rewarded for his party regularity.¹⁰

But Adams thought little of Campbell (previously, at this time, or later), and offered the name of William Lowndes, of

⁷*Annals*, 14 Cong., 1 Sess. (1815-1816)—15 Cong., 1 Sess. (1817-1818), *passim*. See also Coit, *John C. Calhoun*, 101-119; and Lynch, *Fifty Years of Party Warfare, 1789-1837*, pp. 246-248.

⁸Monroe to Campbell, April 11, 1818, in Campbell Papers (Library of Congress); *Annals*, 15 Cong., 1 Sess. (1817-1818), 385.

⁹John C. Hildt, "Early Diplomatic Negotiations of the United States with Russia," *Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science*, Series XXIV, No. 5, 6 (Baltimore, 1906), 117.

¹⁰Adams, ed., *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, IV, 72-73.

South Carolina, who at the time was the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee in the House of Representatives. After some discussion, Monroe agreed with Adams, and the next day, April 5, the post was offered to Lowndes. The South Carolinian refused the position, however; and Monroe returned to his first choice, Campbell. When Lowndes refused the appointment, Adams again called on Monroe to discuss the matter and again objected to Campbell's appointment. But the President informed Adams that several very prominent figures in national politics, including William H. Crawford of Georgia and John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, had approached him in behalf of Campbell and that all of them agreed that the Tennessean was an exceedingly suitable choice for the post. After this conversation Adams withdrew his voiced objections to Campbell, and on April 11 the place was offered to the western senator.¹¹ Monroe's letter to Campbell was as follows: "Mr. Pinkney having obtained his recall from Russia, it becomes necessary to supply his place, by an immediate appointment, of his successor. The confidence I repose in your abilities & integrity, induces me to offer to your acceptance, this trust. You will have the goodness to give me, as early an answer, as in your power." Campbell's answer was to accept the position and resign from the Senate. He had advanced a long way from the position of an immigrant child in the backwoods of colonial North Carolina. Now he was returning to Europe as minister in one of the leading powers of the world. There were only a few higher political or diplomatic positions that his country could offer him.

Adams did not block Campbell's appointment as minister, as indeed he could not do,¹² since the President and the Senate have the final say-so on such matters, but he was not pleased with it; and he never truly welcomed Campbell as an associate with the State Department. Adams was never overly

¹¹*Ibid.*, 76-78.

¹²Bemis, *John Quincy Adams*, 262, states that Adams "had relatively little to do with appointments in the foreign service. . . . President Monroe . . . already had filled up most of the legations abroad by the time the Adams reached Washington. He continued personally to attend to the vacancies that occurred until Adam's own election to the Presidency."

impressed with Campbell or with many other Westerners,¹³ and he was not about to change his snobbish attitude now. In a letter written shortly afterward to a close friend, he expressed his innermost thoughts toward such appointments as Campbell's: "I am no friend," he snapped, "to the profusion for the payment of public service. . . . Men of affluent fortunes may be willing to accept as a salary for a year that which will little more than defray their necessary expenses for a quarter; but throughout the United States how many men are there able by their private resources to be laid under this contribution? And of that number, small as it is, how many possess talents suited to represent the nation with honor and to execute the trust of its most important interests which must be confided to them?"¹⁴

Immediately after his appointment, Campbell called on Adams for preliminary instructions, and then went to Nashville to prepare for his trip to Russia. He was in Nashville until May 26, on which date he began his return trip to Washington, and he then remained in the capital until July 3.¹⁵ He conferred several times with Adams about his new post. The Secretary of State impressed on him that his duties would be of great importance, for with the downfall of Napoleon the Russian Government had become a leading diplomatic power in Europe. Through the person of Alexander I the country was dominating the Holy Alliance, impotent as it was, and was an active member of the Quadruple Alliance (Russia, Prussia, Austria, England). Because of the Tsar's preëminent position, the American Department of State was especially interested in his attitude toward relations between

¹³Adams, ed., *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, IV, 67-68.

¹⁴Adams to William Plumer, July 6, 1818, in Worthington Chauncey Ford, ed., *Writings of John Quincy Adams*, 7 vols. (New York, 1913-1917), VI, 382-383.

¹⁵Adams, ed., *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, IV, 80; *Nashville Clarion & Tennessee Gazette*, May 12, 26, 1818; and G. W. Campbell Diary during My Ministry to Russia, July 3, 1818—October 31, 1820 (in possession of Mrs. Susan M. Brown, Spring Hill, Tennessee). This Diary is cited hereafter as Campbell Diary. See Weymouth T. Jordan, ed., "Excerpts from the Diary of a Tennessean at the Court of the Tsar, 1812-1820," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, XV (1943), 104-109, and his "Diary of George Washington Campbell, American Minister to Russia, 1818-1820," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, VII (June, September, 1948), 152-170, 259-280.

Spain and the Spanish colonies in South America. The colonies were seeking their independence, which many influential Americans, led by Adams and Henry Clay, wished to recognize. On several occasions Tsar Alexander had suggested the use of the power and prestige of the Concert of Europe to force the colonies to renew their allegiance with Spain.¹⁶ For example, in May, just after Campbell's appointment, Adams was informed by the Portuguese minister in the United States that the Holy Alliance was determined to support Spain in her efforts to regain the wayward colonies. Russia, added the Portuguese, was to be rewarded for her co-operation in the project with a grant of Spanish territory on the American continent.¹⁷ Adams reminded Campbell that if such a program were allowed to materialize, it would be detrimental to the interests of the United States, particularly in the negotiations then on foot with Spain for the purchase of Florida.¹⁸ It was evident, said Adams, that the maintenance of friendly relations with Russia was one of the paramount interests of the United States.

On June 28, Campbell received two letters of instruction from Adams. The first letter had to do with several duties Campbell was to perform in route to Russia. During his journey he would have occasion to stop off for a short time at Elsenaur (Helsingör), Denmark, where he was to deliver a treaty which had been ratified by the United States and Sweden. The treaty, said Adams, was to be turned over to an agent who would deliver it to Jonathan Russell, the American minister at Stockholm. Campbell's next stop-over after Elsenaur would be Copenhagen, where he was to request of

¹⁶For Russia's attitude toward Latin America at this period, see Benjamin Platt Thomas, "Russo-American Relations, 1815-1867," Johns Hopkins University *Studies in Historical and Political Science*, Series XLVIII, No. 2 (Baltimore, 1930); "Correspondence of the Russian Ministers in Washington, 1818-1825," *American Historical Review*, XVII (January, 1913), 309-345, and *ibid.*, XVIII (April, 1913), 537-562; Dexter Perkins, "Russia and the Spanish Colonies, 1817-1818," *ibid.*, XXVIII (July, 1923), 656-672; and William Spence Robertson, "Russia and the Emancipation of Spanish America, 1816-1826," *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, XXI (May, 1941), 196-221.

¹⁷Adams, ed., *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, IV, 86.

¹⁸See Bemis, *John Quincy Adams*, 300-340.

the Danish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Rosenkrantz, that an American consul be allowed to proceed to the Danish island of St. Thomas to replace the consul who had recently become involved in difficulties over custom duties with the Danish Governor-general and who had been removed at the Governor-general's request. During his talk with Rosenkrantz, Campbell was also to inform him that the American Government had no intention of abandoning certain claims, long due, of its citizens against Denmark. Referring to what was to be one of Campbell's major duties while in Russia, Adams wrote, "They [the major European powers] have not yet agreed upon any concert of operations with regard to Spain and South America. It will be acceptable to learn as early as possible whatever determination, and even what deliberations, occur between them on the subject, as well as any others to which the course of events may give rise."¹⁹

Adams' second letter of instruction was concerned entirely with the new minister's duties after his arrival in Russia. Campbell, wrote Adams, should press, but not too vigorously, for a commercial treaty with Russia. Three former American ministers in St. Petersburg, including Adams himself, had tried to conclude such a treaty, but with no success. The United States, went on Adams, enjoyed the same commercial privileges in Russia as all other countries, and since relations were favorable at the time, it was not absolutely essential to conclude a treaty. Campbell was to insist, however, that the Russian Government continue to treat American merchants on the same basis as other merchants who were trading in Russia. Anything less than "most-favored-nation" treatment was unacceptable to the United States Government.²⁰

¹⁹Adams to Campbell, June 28, 1818, in United States Ministers, Instructions, Department of State, VIII, 205-214, 214-220 (Archives of the Department of State, Washington). See also Ford, ed., *Writings of John Quincy Adams*, VI, 352-366; and William R. Manning, ed., *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States Concerning the Independence of the Latin-American Nations*, 3 vols. (New York, 1925-1926), I, 71-74. This latter work includes a number of excerpts from the Adams-Campbell correspondence of 1818-1820.

²⁰Adams to Campbell, June 28, 1818, in United States Ministers, Instructions, VIII, 205-206.

Another subject mentioned in the instructions was that of Russian interests in the northwest coast of the United States. Adams informed Campbell that the Tsar was concentrating on the erection of a large army, rather than a navy, and that without an efficient navy Russia was not to be feared. It was likely, Adams concluded on this score, that her movements on the northwest coast would "never form a subject of serious difference, or jarring interest between that empire and the United States."²¹ Of much more vital concern to the United States, Adams said, was Russia's attitude and action toward the conflict between Spain and her South American colonies. Recently the Portuguese Government of Brazil had taken Montevideo and the eastern bank of the La Plata River from both Spain and the revolutionists. In an attempted settlement of the affair the Tsar had sided with Spain, and now he seemed to have "taken the same bias against the colonies." If at all possible, while in Russia Campbell was to ascertain Alexander's policy in any further disputes arising over this question. On his arrival in St. Petersburg, moreover, Campbell was to question government authorities concerning the action taken at the conference of European monarchs then going on at Aix-la-Chapelle. More specifically, he was to learn of the exact attitude, so far as possible, of the members of the Holy Alliance toward the whole South American question. In his first interview with the Tsar he was to inform the Russian Government that the United States was deeply concerned with affairs in South America, and that it wished to co-operate with the Allied Nations of Europe, "but we will not participate in, and cannot approve any interposition of other Powers, unless it be to promote total Independence, political and commercial, of the Colonies."²² This statement of Adams' to Campbell indicates quite pointedly that the Secretary of State

²¹See *ibid.*, 205-214. This matter of Russian interest in North America was, however, important enough for Monroe and Adams to include a reference to the subject in the Monroe Doctrine in 1823. See Bemis, *John Quincy Adams*, 384-388.

²²Adams to Campbell, June 28, 1818, in United States Ministers, Instructions, VIII, 205-206.

was working toward a policy which was to culminate several years later (1823) in the Monroe Doctrine.

Concluding his instructions, Adams referred to General Andrew Jackson's recent spectacular pursuit of Indians into Spanish Florida. The irrepressible General's actions were exceedingly embarrassing to the State Department, said Adams. Campbell was requested to make it known as soon as possible to the Russian Tsar that Jackson's foray had not been sanctioned by the American Government and that the United States was willing to adjust any differences arising over the matter, if Spain were willing. Adams also pointed out to Campbell that one of his important duties was to observe any negotiations being carried on between the principal European Powers. He should correspond freely with other American ministers stationed in Europe, maintain a friendly intercourse with other ministers and ambassadors accredited to the Russian court, notice particularly if any agreements were made concerning South American affairs, and report his observations as soon and regularly as possible. On the latter subject, he was to report all conversations as well as agreements, Adams concluded.²³

Early in July, Campbell left Washington for Boston, where he was to embark on board the frigate, *Guerriere*, for Europe. Stopping in Baltimore for one day, he took in several of the important sights, including the "Hospital in the environs of the town, and particularly the anatomical Cabinet, exhibiting very exact representations of all parts of the human body; prepared in wax-work by Doctor Joseff Chiapi, an Italian." He also visited "Peal's museum, lately established there, containing a considerable variety of natural curiosities." Moving on to Philadelphia, he and Mrs. Campbell visited the Atheneum; "West's celebrated painting of Christ healing the Sick;" the Academy of Fine Arts; "Peak's museum, containing the most general, & probably the greatest collection of natural curiosities to be Seen in America;" "Delaplains Gal-

²³*Ibid.*

lery of Portraits of distinguished Americans;" the Hospital; and the Library. From Philadelphia he proceeded to New York City, where he was particularly impressed with the masterpieces on deposit in the American Academy of Fine Arts. From July 15 to July 24, he was in Boston, where he visited various places of interest and was entertained by prominent persons in and near the city, the persons including the Governor of Massachusetts, ex-President John Adams, Benjamin Crowninshield the Secretary of Navy, William Gray, "& a number of distinguished gentlemen."²⁴ He was so impressed with his reception in New York and Boston that he wrote General Jackson about it; and Jackson replied as follows: "It affords me much pleasure to see the polite attention of the Eastern people toward you—This shows a spirit of harmony towards the southern and western people that I *hope* will grow into permanent harmony between the two interests, and that party spirit & bickering will cease to exist in our happy country."²⁵

On July 24, Campbell set sail from Boston for Elseneur. Arriving at Elseneur on August 31, after an uneventful crossing except for a severe case of seasickness of Mrs. Campbell, who was expecting a child, Campbell proceeded with the instructions he had received from Adams. The Swedish treaty which he had in his possession was given to an agent of the American State Department, with orders to deliver it to Minister Russell at Stockholm. The next day Campbell's ship sailed for Copenhagen, and on arriving there he obtained an interview with Rosenkrantz, the minister of Foreign Affairs. Campbell expressed the good wishes of the United States toward Denmark, and brought up the subject of stationing an American consul on the island of St. Thomas.²⁶ While in Copenhagen, the Campbell family visited numerous palaces, art galleries, museums, "went to see the Kings horses exercised—. . . Saw the King riding on horse-back," and "Dined with Mr.

²⁴Campbell Diary, July 3-21, 1818.

²⁵Jackson to Campbell, October 5, 1818, in Campbell Papers (in possession of Mrs. Susan M. Brown).

²⁶Campbell Diary, July 24-September 4, 1818.

Rosenkrantz—Minister of Foreign affairs—a very intelligent—well informed Gentleman—and a number of High officers of the Court, & Foreign Ministers—among them the Minister of Finance of Denmark—Admiral Tenms—the Spanish Minister—the Swedish Minister—etc etc.—”²⁷ On September 7 the Campbell entourage got under way on the last part of the journey to St. Petersburg, and after stopping at several little ports for sight-seeing adventures, reached St. Petersburg on September 17, putting up temporarily at the Hotel de l’Europe, which, according to Campbell, “was a very Splendid building, like a palace.”²⁸

While traveling from Copenhagen to St. Petersburg, Campbell wrote Adams about his interview with Rosenkrantz. He reported that he had asked that an American consul be allowed on St. Thomas, but the Danish minister had refused the request for fear that other nations would demand the same privilege. But, Campbell reported, Rosenkrantz had made a special concession to the United States, promising that an American agent might be appointed “*to perform the duties of vice-consul at St. Thomas, but not to be officially acknowledged as such by the Danish Government*, nor indeed, he said, would they wish to see it announced in the newspapers.” In the same report, Campbell also informed Adams that he had talked with the Spanish minister at the Danish court, and had learned that the subject of Spain’s relations with her South American colonies, in which Adams was so interested, would be discussed by the crowned heads at Aix-la-Chapelle.²⁹

When Campbell arrived in St. Petersburg, the Tsar and his minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Nesselrode, were attending the conference then going on at Aix-la-Chapelle. Campbell therefore presented his credentials to the acting minister of Foreign Affairs, D’Oubril, who informed him that he could not be officially recognized as Amer-

²⁷*Ibid.*, September 4, 1818.

²⁸*Ibid.*, September 7-17, 1818.

²⁹Campbell to Adams, September 15, 1818, in Russia, George W. Campbell, July 21, 1818—September 12, 1820, Department of State (Archives of the Department of State). Cited hereafter as Russia, G. W. Campbell.

ican minister until the emperor's return, which was expected during the early part of November; meanwhile, D'Oubril said, he could proceed with ordinary business. In the interval before the emperor's return to St. Petersburg, Campbell's time was fully occupied. He appointed Charles Pinkney as both his official and private secretary; he attended to several personal matters such as renting a house, engaging a carriage, and hiring several Negro servants; and he made himself known to all the members of the diplomatic corps at the Russian court. Of the diplomats he was particularly impressed with Count Laval of France,³⁰ with whom he spent much of his time during his stay in Russia. Since French was the official language of the Russian court, Campbell set about to learn it and perhaps received some instruction from Laval. During the first few months of his ministry, his Diary, which he kept while he was minister, was filled with easy French phrases. After about a year he became quite adept with the language.

His first dispatch to Adams contained some rather interesting information. He had dined with Count Laval, who was thoroughly shocked when he heard of Andrew Jackson's recent military actions in Florida. Laval hoped, Campbell said, that the United States would not countenance the General's actions, and he believed that the Tsar would feel the same way. Campbell also remarked in his dispatch that the ministers at the Russian court were extremely reticent in their conversation: "I need not tell you that no one speaks freely here, if at all, on matters of state." He would, he reminded Adams, keep the State Department posted on every subject that he thought would be of any interest or value.³¹

On October 31, Campbell forwarded to Adams some information concerning the Aix-la-Chapelle conference. It was a confirmed fact, he said, that Spain had insisted that no final

³⁰Campbell Diary, September 18—December 31, 1818. See also William Pinkney to Campbell, July 21, 1818, in Campbell Papers (in possession of Mrs. Susan M. Brown).

³¹Campbell to Adams, September 25, 1818, in Russia, G. W. Campbell.

action be taken by the conference in regard to Spanish interests in Latin America. He thought that Spain had made this demand because she had not been invited to send delegates to the conference. From his same source of information he had learned that England had offered her services as mediator in the disputes between Spain and her colonies. England, he added, was not willing to use force to carry out any course which might be decided by mediation. This fact that England had offered to mediate the disputes was not new to Adams, but undoubtedly he was glad to have it confirmed by Campbell or by any other source, for it represented a rift within the ranks of the Quadruple Alliance, which was all to the good as far as the promotion of independence of the South American colonies was concerned.³²

Adams was greatly concerned at this time over what attitude Russia, as leader of the Holy Alliance, might take on the whole Latin American question. In regard to Latin American affairs he was now contemplating a specific course of action, which he called to Campbell's attention in a letter of instructions dated August 20, 1818: "Referring to your instructions on the subject of South-American affairs, I am now directed to enquire what part you think the Russian Government will take in regard to the dispute between Spain and her Colonies, and in what light they will view an acknowledgement of the Independence of the Colonies by the United States? Whether they will view it as an act of hostility to Spain, and in case Spain should declare war against us, in consequence, whether Russia will take part with her in it."³³

When Campbell received this significant inquiry, his reply was that in his opinion Alexander would use all his influence to aid Spain regain her colonies. And as for Russia's attitude toward American recognition of the independence of the South American colonies, he reported:

³²*Ibid.* to *ibid.*, October 31, 1818, in *ibid.* See also Benjamin Rush to Adams, July 25, August 3, 1818, in Manning, ed., *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, III, 1443-1449.

³³Adams to Campbell, August 20, 1818, in United States Ministers, Instructions, VIII, 247.

. . . he [Alexander] would view in an unfavorable light an acknowledgement of the independence of the Colonies by our Government, and would in such event be inclined to induce the Allied Powers to interpose if there was a prospect of success, to prevent the establishment of such extensive independent states and the consequent spread of republican principles; but he would not separately unite with Spain in a war against the United States. For though his military is enormous, estimated at more than a million of the best disciplined troops in Europe, yet the better opinion seems to be, that his true character is that of a calculating politician, that he does not possess in a distinguished degree military talents, and is not inclined to engage in war. It is therefore most probable he will use his great personal influence (for his manner is said to be very prepossessing) as well as that derived from the immense physical force he could command to accomplish his views by over-awing the councils of Europe, without hazarding his present high standing, by engaging single-handed in any great contest.

. . . in the meantime I shall not fail to pursue the enquiries on this subject, aided by such new lights as the return of the court and my presentation to the emperor may put it in my power to obtain, . . .

Campbell also, in this same report, reminded Adams that in determining its policy toward the South American colonies, the United States should never forget the importance of Alexander's position in Europe, for, according to Campbell, the Tsar was "at present without doubt the great arbiter of the politics of Europe;" and the new Quintuple Alliance (Russia, Prussia, Austria, England, and France) just formed at Aix-la-Chapelle, would, he concluded, "for some time, greatly influence if not control the conduct of all the powers of Europe."³⁴

On January 8, 1819, Alexander finally returned to St. Petersburg, and shortly afterward Campbell, after being in Russia for more than three months, was officially accredited as American minister. On February 7, he was presented to the emperor, and within the next few days to the empress, the empress mother, and the Grand Duke Nicholas and the Duchess. He was especially impressed with the Grand Duchess, whom he described as "a very fine handsome woman—rather tall—fair complexion—delicate in her form, & Soft & elegant in her manners." Of the Grand Duke, Campbell

³⁴Campbell to Adams, December 22, 1818, in Russia, G. W. Campbell.

wrote in his Diary: "The Duke himself is a very good-looking man—a plain & tolerably intelligent face—& a pleasant countenance."³⁵ In giving to Adams an account of the presentation to the emperor, Campbell reiterated his earlier opinion on Alexander's probable attitude toward American recognition of the former Spanish American colonies. Now, Campbell reported, the emperor had stated quite emphatically that he would not countenance United States recognition of the colonies. The Tsar had added, however, that he would give military aid to Spain only in conjunction with the other European countries. The Aix-la-Chapelle conference had proposed to the king of Spain that Lord Wellington of England be appointed to mediate between Spain and her colonies, but Alexander believed, Campbell wrote, that Spain was unwilling to come to terms. Even so, Russia would be forced, with the aid of others, "to maintain the cause of *legitimacy*, & prevent the establishment of such powerful Independent States, as might by giving a wider spread to free principles, tend to endanger its stability."³⁶

In a private letter written to President Monroe more than a month after his reception with the Tsar, Campbell gave a more personal account of his meeting with Alexander. He believed, he said, that "the imperial family possesses more of what is termed good breeding than any other Royal family in Europe." In describing the emperor, Campbell wrote his old friend that Alexander did not seem to have a "great mind" and "His real character is no doubt that of a calculating politician, rather cautious than enterprising, and not ashamed to use flattery." However, the emperor was, it seemed to him after meeting and talking with him, determined to maintain the commanding position that he held among the great powers of Europe.³⁷

Campbell thus was busily engaged in St. Petersburg, but all was not well with him from a personal standpoint. Dur-

³⁵Campbell Diary, February 28, 1819.

³⁶Campbell to Adams, February 18, 1819, in *Russia*, G. W. Campbell.

³⁷Campbell to Monroe, March 20, 1819, in *Monroe Papers*.

ing his first winter in Russia a calamity occurred in his family from which he never fully recovered: the death of three of his children. All of them succumbed to the same disease, typhus fever, and all three were buried in the English church in St. Petersburg. The first death, that of his second son, Benjamin, occurred on April 10, 1819. Two days later the oldest child in the family, George, died; and on April 14, Elizabeth McKay also succumbed. A fourth child, born after the Campbells arrival in Russia, was the only one to survive.³⁸ These deaths were tragic indeed, and took much of the joy out of the Campbells' sojourn in Russia. After the childrens' deaths, Campbell received numerous messages of condolence from the members of the imperial family and from his fellow-members of the diplomatic corps, and during the rest of his stay in Russia he received much personal attention from the emperor himself. The loss to his family was almost more than he and Mrs. Campbell could bear, however. It was not until more than a month after the heart-rendering event that Campbell recovered sufficiently to resume his normal activities as minister. After April, 1819, his greatest desire, and one which he persistently placed before Adams and Monroe, was to leave Russia, which had brought him an irreparable loss.³⁹

In a dispatch to Adams, of May 3, Campbell informed the Secretary of State of the deaths of his children. He also included some more welcomed news, probably the most important information he sent to Washington while he was in Russia:

The struggle in South America for Independence, will, there is now reason to believe, be allowed to progress without interrup-

³⁸Campbell Diary, March 30—April 19, 1820. George was born on September 1, 1813, in Georgetown, Maryland; Benjamin was born January 8, 1815, in Nashville; and Elizabeth on October 8, 1815, in Nashville. After the death of his three children, Campbell gave the name of George to his remaining son. Two children were born later: Elizabeth, also known as Lyzinka, and Benjamin. Thus the names of George, Benjamin, and Elizabeth were used twice among the Campbell children. The second George and Lyzinka were the only children to survive Campbell. Family Bible of the L. M. Brown Family.

³⁹Campbell to Adams, May 14, June 5, 26, 1819, in Russia, G. W. Campbell; Campbell Diary, April 14—May 14, 1819.

tion from this quarter. The conduct of old Spain, has not, it is presumed, been such as to induce, on the part of the Emperor, a Disposition in her favor. The events there appear to be viewed with a less lively interest than formerly.

There is reason to believe that about the close of the Congress at Aix-la-Chapelle instructions were given on the part of this government to put in a state of preparation for active service at the opening of the Spring twelve ships of the line, besides other vessels.

This step, it is understood, was taken with the view of being prepared to cooperate with Spain, should it become necessary, in enforcing such measures relating to her revolted Colonies as might be in accordance with the recommendation of the allied sovereigns; and under an impression that she would acquiesce in the course proposed by them, of mediation, . . . Not long after the return of the Emperor, however, to the capital, the foregoing instructions were, it is said, countermanded, and the usual number only of vessels of war were directed to be prepared for service; in consequence, it is believed, of information received by this court, that Spain was not disposed to pursue the course suggested to her by the crowned heads at Aix-la-Chapelle; and since that time, it would seem, a less lively interest is manifested here in relation to the affairs of South America.⁴⁰

To Adams, this was welcomed news indeed, although it is probable that he had already been informed that Spain had refused to accept the mediation offered at Aix-la-Chapelle. But this first-hand information from Campbell on the shift of the Russian attitude was naturally of great value in working out a policy toward South America. For the time being, at least, the United States would not have to worry excessively about Russian interference in South American affairs.⁴¹ And probably of more significance, to Adams' way of thinking, was the fact that his Department could infer from Campbell's dispatch that Russia would also not interpose with the ratification of the treaty which had recently been drawn up between Spain and the United States over the disposition of Florida. Campbell indeed sent home some good news.⁴²

⁴⁰Campbell to Adams, May 3, 1819, in Russia, G. W. Campbell.

⁴¹See Foster Rhea Dulles, *The Road to Teheran, The Story of Russia and America, 1781-1945* (Princeton, 1945), 38-46. W. P. Cresson, *The Holy Alliance, The European Background of the Monroe Doctrine* (New York, 1922), 88-91, quotes from and sums up the importance of some of Campbell's dispatches to Adams.

⁴²The Florida treaty was signed in February, 1819, and was ratified two years later, after much bickering.

By the early spring of 1819, Campbell was anxious to leave Russia, and on May 14, one month after the death of his children, he asked Adams for his recall. He desired, he said, to return to the United States as soon as propriety would allow, and the latest he could possibly remain in Russia was the spring of 1820. If absolutely necessary, he would agree to remain in Russia until 1820, but he hoped that he could go home sooner.⁴³ In a letter to President Monroe, dated May 15, he stated that there was very little business of importance to transact with the Russian Government. He had made several attempts to conclude a commercial treaty, he told Monroe, but so far his efforts had not been rewarded. He wanted to continue serving the United States, but he desired both a more pleasant climate and a location where he could obtain more frequent news about affairs at home.⁴⁴

During the summer of 1819 the Campbells turned to a round of sight-seeing, giving parties, attending balls, visiting various towns near St. Petersburg, visiting art galleries, reviewing troops, and observing sham battles. The high point of the summer for Campbell socially was a court dinner, August 20, at Pavlovsky, where he sat at the same table as the empress and the empress mother. He recorded in his Diary that the empress "attracted much attention & general admiration—Her modest aspect & demeanor, add much to the effect produced by her other engaging qualities—Her face is rather interesting than striking—plain— & though not handsome, the features are fairly drawn, & well arranged. The old Empress, more masculine—with strong traits of character—more pompous—and less loved by the people."⁴⁵

During this period, Campbell had few official duties to perform, for the court was away from St. Petersburg during the greater part of the spring and early summer of 1819,

⁴³Campbell to Adams, May 14, 1819, in Russia, G. W. Campbell.

⁴⁴Campbell to Monroe, May 15, 1819, in Monroe Papers. Campbell also complained bitterly throughout his Diary of his lack of information about American affairs while he was in Russia.

⁴⁵Campbell Diary, August 20, May 24—July 15, 1819.

and, as he often wrote in his Diary, he received few instructions from Adams. In June, he made another effort to obtain a commercial treaty with Russia, but again Nesselrode evaded the question.⁴⁶ He did, however, continue his conversations with the other diplomats at St. Petersburg, and whenever possible tried to sound them out on the Florida treaty, which now had become one of the more important objectives of the American State Department. In July, he reported to Adams that every minister to whom he had talked seemed satisfied that Florida was to fall into the hands of the United States rather than England, as many of them had expected.⁴⁷ A short time later he also received a letter from the American minister in England, Richard Rush, informing him that England had promised openly not to interfere in the ratification of the treaty, "and does not intend to give us any trouble on this head."⁴⁸

Russia's attitude toward the treaty took a very different turn, however. During the summer Tsar Alexander once more caused Adams much concern. On June 3, Adams wrote Campbell that M. P. de Politica, Russian minister to the United States, had informed him that the Russian Government was still unwilling to sanction United States recognition of the revolted Spanish colonies in South America; and, moreover, if American recognition occurred it would be looked on "— as an *act of hostility* against Spain the Emperor's ally." As a result of this information, although Adams knew what England's policy would be in connection with the Florida treaty, now of primary importance to him, he still was uncertain about Russia. He urged Campbell to suggest to the Tsar that Russia stay out of the matter.⁴⁹

By August, the question of the ratification of the Florida treaty was the paramount consideration of the Department

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, June 19, 1819.

⁴⁷Campbell to Adams, July 20, 1819, in Russia, G. W. Campbell.

⁴⁸Rush to Campbell, July 24, 1819, in Campbell Papers (in possession of Mrs. Susan M. Brown).

⁴⁹Adams to Campbell, June 3, 1819, in United States Ministers, Instructions, VIII, 340.

of State, and Adams sent out a circular on the subject to the American ministers in Russia, England, and France. The United States, said Adams, and he presumably was bluffing, was willing to accept ratification of the treaty within the next six months, but the latest date at which it would accept was the first Monday in December, 1819. At that time, he reminded the three ministers, Congress would convene, and if the ratified treaty was not then in the hands of the State Department, the whole matter would be placed before Congress for settlement. There was no way of ascertaining what action might be taken by an unpredictable Congress, and all consequences would rest entirely on Spain for not having ratified the treaty. President Monroe, concluded Adams, was determined to take possession of two towns in Florida, Pensacola and St. Augustine, even if the Spanish king failed to ratify the treaty, for he believed that since an agreement had been made Spain ought to honor it. Campbell was asked to forward this information to the Tsar.⁵⁰

Campbell now had something to do, and he set about it eagerly. The Russian court became quite excited when Nesselrode was informed of the action contemplated by President Monroe. Campbell was questioned closely on the subject by both the Tsar and Nesselrode, but, as he reported to Adams, he still did not believe that Alexander would intervene in behalf of Spain. "The influence of the Emperor with Ferdinand had declined (perhaps occasioned [*sic*] by the result of the contract respecting the Russian ships of war), and the same cordiality did not now exist between the two countries as formerly," reiterated Campbell.⁵¹ This dispatch was written on October 13, 1819; and Campbell pressed the advantages which the United States held over Spain. Later, on November 1, Campbell informed Nesselrode that Spain was planning to send a special minister to the United States to sound out the sentiments of the State Department on the Florida treaty. This move on the part of Spain, said Campbell to Nesselrode,

⁵⁰*Ibid.* to *ibid.*, August 23, 1819, in *ibid.*, 358-360.

⁵¹Campbell to Adams, October 13, 1819, in *Russia*, G. W. Campbell.

was an unforgivable breach of faith, since the treaty had been drawn up by ministers with full powers. Spain, argued Campbell, was trying to back down on its agreement. Nesselrode admitted that the Spanish should go ahead with the treaty, and that President Monroe was within his rights in demanding possession of Pensacola and St. Augustine. In reporting on this interview, Campbell also wrote: "From M. Nesselrode's manner as well as from what he said, I was under the impression that he felt a degree of chagrin as well as regret at the conduct of Spain on this occasion, not unaccompanied with some anxiety for the consequences that might result therefrom."⁵² This sort of information was precisely what Adams wanted, of course.

That the Russian Government was indeed anxiously concerned over Spain's refusal to ratify the Florida treaty was demonstrated shortly afterward when Nesselrode instructed the Russian minister in Washington to implore the United States not to go to war with Spain over the matter.⁵³ That such anxiety would result had of course been the aim of Monroe and Adams in announcing their ultimatum. Their course of action was a means of testing the support which Spain could expect from those European courts, including Russia, which had supported her in the past. That Alexander I backed down from his previous threatening position was gratifying.

After having pointedly called Nesselrode's attention to Monroe's proposed course in regard to the Florida treaty, Campbell again turned to the social life of St. Petersburg. On November 21, 1819, Mrs. Campbell was finally presented to the royal family, and, according to Campbell, "She was recvd. in the kindest manner, by the Empress as well as the Emperor, who were together in the Same room into which she was ushered—They requested her to sit on the Same

⁵²*Ibid.* to *ibid.*, November 1, 1819, in *ibid.* See also the *Nashville Whig*, April 6, 1820, for a portion of this dispatch.

⁵³See Hildt, "Early Diplomatic Negotiations of the United States with Russia," *loc. cit.*, 135-142.

Sofa with the Empress—who sat beside her, & the Emperor in a chair near her, & in front—both conversed with her in the kindest manner, & Shewed every attention, they could have done to a relative,—treating her more like a friend & relation, than as a Stranger—”⁵⁴ During the latter part of November Campbell spent much of his time calling on various ministers, all of whom were much interested in the probable outcome of the dispute between the United States and Spain over the Florida treaty, and this bit of information he sent to Adams.⁵⁵ On November 28, he received notice from Adams that President Monroe had granted his request for recall from Russia “at such time as may suit your wishes; but . . . he hopes you will remain, until the ensuing spring—on taking your departure you will leave the affairs of the Legation in the charge of Mr. Pinkney.” Campbell’s immediate reply was that he would leave in the spring, “as early as the circumstances will permit.”⁵⁶

At a meeting with Nesselrode, December 10, Campbell again discussed the subject of Spanish ratification of the Florida treaty. He informed Nesselrode that although he was unaware of what action had been taken by Spain, he believed that President Monroe would carry out the procedure already decided upon: if the treaty had not yet been ratified, it was now very likely in the hands of Congress, he said. Nesselrode on this occasion brought up another subject of much interest to Campbell, namely: commercial relations between their two countries and a new tariff which the Russian minister said would be advantageous to the United States. As Campbell wrote later to Adams, the tariff allowed admission of all American goods into Russia, except a few with which Russian manufacturers did not wish to compete. Many duties, particularly on clothes, were to be reduced, while the rate on refined sugar was appreciably increased. Rates on raw sugar, on the other hand, were to be greatly reduced,

⁵⁴Campbell Diary, November 21, 1819.

⁵⁵Campbell to Adams, November 28, 1819, in Russia, G. W. Campbell.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*; Adams to Campbell, August 23, 1819, in United States Ministers, Instructions, VIII, 360-361; Campbell Diary, November 28, 1819.

and this would be especially favorable to American merchants because most raw sugar imported by Russia came from the West Indies and the greater part of it was shipped in American bottoms. To Campbell it seemed that certain sections of the Russian tariff had been written especially for the benefit of the United States, and he reported Nesselrode as remarking that he, too, thought it "highly favorable to the trade of the United States with this country."⁵⁷ Campbell's conclusion was that the new tariff was very likely the best arrangement that could be made with Russia, for he did not believe that Nesselrode wished to enter into commercial agreements with any foreign government. His reason for this, said Campbell, was the desire to protect Russian manufacturing, and he wanted no written stipulations with other countries which might harm home industry.⁵⁸ Campbell had reason to be pleased with this Russian tariff. He very probably had nothing to do with bringing about the tariff, but it was arranged while he was in Russia, and at least that was more than could be said for three previous ministers in Russia.

During the last six months of his ministry in Russia, Campbell carried on little official business, again utilizing most of his time in attending court balls, parades, dining with other ministers, traveling near St. Petersburg, and in having his portrait painted.⁵⁹ On one occasion, March 4, 1820, he attended a public examination of a young girls' school in St. Petersburg. He was pleased with everything except the dancing of the girls. They knew something about natural history, electricity, and music, he said, but their dancing "resembled that of the Chevalier Guards or a military regiment going through their military exercises."⁶⁰ One of his letters written during this period should be noted, however, for in it Campbell summed up his opinion of Alexander and

⁵⁷Campbell to Adams, December 22, 1819, in Russia, G. W. Campbell; Campbell Diary, December 10, 1819.

⁵⁸Campbell to Adams, February 28, 1820, in Russia, G. W. Campbell.

⁵⁹Campbell Diary, January—June, 1820.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, March 4, 1820.

Russia. He wrote Monroe, on January 30, 1820, that it was the general belief at the Russian court that the United States and Spain would adjust their differences "without resort to actual hostilities." The Tsar was much interested in maintaining the *status quo* in Europe, "so as to guard at least against any innovations calculated to endanger or in any manner weaken the cause of legitimacy." Alexander, said Campbell, was meddling in all affairs of the world, and under his leadership Russia was offering her services to settle disputes between other countries, but "when such differences assume a serious aspect, and she is called on to avow herself and take a decided part towards their adjustment, she at once holds herself aloof." He believed that his first impression of the Tsar was correct, and still considered him as "a calculating, designing, and some would say, cunning politician."⁶¹ This diagnosis of Alexander has become the generally accepted one, and it was particularly borne out, as were other of Campbell's opinions of Russia, when Alexander and the rest of Spain's former friends deserted that unhappy country and she was forced into a ratification of the Florida treaty.⁶²

In March, 1820, Adams received several dispatches from Campbell emphasizing the fact that Russia hoped for a peaceful settlement of the ratification of the Florida treaty. Both the Tsar and Nesselrode, he said, begged that the United States would not take measures of self-satisfaction against Spain because of that country's refusal to ratify the treaty.⁶³ Campbell had now indeed sent some welcomed news to Washington. The Russian entreaty was considered of such importance that it was incorporated into President Monroe's message of March 27 to Congress, in which he emphasized the great interest Alexander had shown in the whole affair. Because of the Tsar's concern, and more particularly because

⁶¹Campbell to Monroe, January 30, 1820, in Monroe Papers.

⁶²Maurice Paléologue, *The Enigmatic Czar, The Life of Alexander I of Russia* (New York, 1938), 318, concludes that Alexander has "remained a riddle." See also Leonid I. Strakhovsky, *Alexander I, The Man who Defeated Napoleon* (New York, 1947), 7-9, 250-252, 275-279.

⁶³Adams, ed., *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, V, 24.

a new Spanish minister, with full power to ratify the treaty, was expected to arrive soon in Washington, Monroe recommended to Congress that the ratification question be postponed until the next session of Congress.⁶⁴ After this recommendation was made and acceded to, Russia showed little further interest in the Florida treaty.

On May 17, 1820, Campbell informed Nesselrode of his proposed departure for the United States; and on July 3 he presented Charles Pinkney to Nesselrode as the official representative of his country in Russia until a new minister should arrive. On July 7 he had a farewell interview with the Tsar, at which time Alexander emphasized that he was well pleased with the new developments in the Florida situation.⁶⁵ The next day, Campbell and his family, "with our baggage—& our servants—four in number—two females—and two men—went on board the Steam-boat engaged of Baird for use alone to take us to Cornstadt." That evening the entourage embarked at Cornstadt for Gravesend, England. On arriving at the latter place, it went by post chaise to London, where it arrived on August 2.⁶⁶

Campbell remained in London for several weeks, attending theaters, visiting numerous places of interest, including Parliament, then traveled for a short time in France and back to England. Finally he arrived in New York City on October 29, went to Washington to report to Monroe and Adams, and proceeded to Nashville, where he arrived on January 7, 1821. In Nashville he was the man of the hour, for he had now held more important political offices than any other man in his state. Shortly after his return to Nashville he was honored at a public dinner given him by the most prominent citizens of Middle Tennessee. On January 16, according to a newspaper account of the affair, "a large and

⁶⁴Richardson, ed., *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, II, 69.

⁶⁵Campbell to Adams, May 17, July 7, 1820, in Russia, G. W. Campbell; Campbell Diary, June 24, July 3, 1820. Campbell was on the payroll officially as minister from April 18, 1818, to July, 1820; the expenses of his ministry amounted to \$35,733.89. *Niles' Weekly Register*, XXIII (October 19, 1822), 110.

⁶⁶Campbell Diary, July 8—August 2, 1820.

respectable assembly sat down at a handsome dinner, prepared by Capt. Kingsley [proprietor of a Nashville inn] for the occasion, at which Major Gen. Andrew Jackson presided," in honor of Campbell.⁶⁷

⁶⁷Nashville *Whig*, January 24, 1821. See also *ibid.*, January 10, 1821; Campbell Diary, August 3—October 29, 1820; Jenkins Whiteside and others to Campbell, January 12, 1821, in Campbell Papers (in possession of Mrs. Susan M. Brown).

Chapter VIII

SOLVING A FRENCH IMBROGLIO

In the years following his return to the United States from Russia, Campbell held only one more position of a public nature: On July 14, 1832, he was appointed by President Andrew Jackson to serve as one of three commissioners to carry out certain provisions of the Rives treaty with France, which was concluded in 1831.¹

The Rives treaty was an important accomplishment in American diplomacy.² In the period 1800-1830 the governments of the United States and France were confronted with some perplexing problems, of which the most complicated was the claims held by Americans against France for spoliations on American commerce between the years 1806 and 1814. Over these spoliations, there developed one of the most entangled controversies in the diplomatic history of the United States. Before the controversy was brought to a successful close the disputants verged on war, and armed conflict was averted possibly for two major reasons: the hard-fisted, blunt, "shirt-sleeve" diplomacy (an innovation for the United States) of President Jackson and the exceedingly embarrassing turn which both domestic and continental affairs took for France in the 1830's. Here the main concern is the American aspect of the execution of the Rives treaty.

The spoliations in question occurred during the period Napoleon Bonaparte was attempting to enforce his Continental System, in the course of which a series of Decrees was

¹Jackson to Campbell, July 14, 1832, in *Journal of the Claims Commission under the Convention between the United States and France, Concluded July 4, 1831*, Department of State, September 17, 1832 (Archives of the Department of State, Washington). Cited hereafter as *Official Journal, Claims Commission*.

²For the text of the treaty see, for example, William M. Malloy, ed., *Treaties, Conventions, International Acts, Protocols, and Agreements between the United States of America and Other Powers, 1776-1909*, 2 vols. (Washington, 1910), I, 523. See also Hunter Miller, ed., *Treaties and Other International Acts of the United States of America*, 8 vols. (Washington, 1931-1948), III, 641-651; and John Bassett Moore, *History and Digest of the International Arbitrations to Which the United States Has Been a Party*, 6 vols. (Washington, 1898), V, 4447-4485.

issued ordering French sea captains and port officials to seize neutral ships and cargoes.³ As a result of the Decrees as well as of British Orders-in-Council of the same period, American shipping suffered severely. Despite American protests, French seizures continued until Napoleon's temporary overthrow in 1814. During those years, as well as after Napoleon's well-known Hundred Days and the return of the Bourbon family to the throne, the United States Government persisted in its demands for indemnity payments. For nearly two decades much of the diplomatic correspondence between France and the United States was concerned with the question of spoliation payments.

Until the year 1831, American ministers in Paris failed miserably in their efforts to solve the outstanding controversies with France.⁴ Finally, on July 4, 1831, William Cabell Rives of Virginia, who was American minister to France, managed to conclude a treaty providing both for settlement of the spoliations and the problem of duties to be placed on certain goods (cotton to France and wines to the United States) shipped between his country and France. Financial arrangements specified in the treaty were: the United States was to pay 1,500,000 francs to France arising from commercial clauses of the treaty for the cession of Louisiana in 1803; as indemnity for spoliations during the Napoleonic era France should pay 25,000,000 francs to the United States. The United States agreed also to distribute the 25,000,000 francs "Among those entitled, in the manner and according to the rules which it shall determine."⁵ Ratifications of the treaty were exchanged at Washington, February 2, 1832; the treaty

³The important Decrees were the Berlin, November, 1806; Milan, November, 1807; Bayonne, April, 1808; Vienna, August, 1809; and Rambouillet, March, 1810.

⁴See Richard Aubrey McLemore, *Franco-American Diplomatic Relations, 1816-1836* (Baton Rouge, 1941). This book does not contain a discussion of the material included here. See also William B. Hatcher, *Edward Livingston, Jeffersonian Republican and Jacksonian Democrat* (Baton Rouge, 1941), 420-457; and G. A. King, "The French Spoliations Claims," *American Journal of International Law*, VI (April, July, October, 1912), 359-380, 629-649, 830-857.

⁵Malloy, ed., *Treaties*, I, 523; Miller, ed., *Treaties*, III, 641, 642; *Register of Debates*, 22 Cong., 1 Sess. (1831-1832), 1201.

was proclaimed July 13, 1832; and on the latter date the Senate passed an Act establishing a Commission to adjudicate spoliation claims held by Americans against France.⁶ It was through this Commission that Campbell was associated with the spoliations question.

In naming the three Commissioners to perform the tremendous task of distributing claims to Americans, President Jackson acted as might be expected: only staunch Democrats were appointed, and Campbell was included among the three members. Since Jackson followed a policy of putting his friends and fellow-Tennesseans on important commissions and in government positions, it was quite natural for him to turn to Campbell, his friend and neighbor and long-time correspondent, as a member of the Board. A more practical reason for Campbell's appointment was the fact that he was a member of Congress during the greater part of the very period when France made its attacks on American ships. Moreover, while in Congress he was particularly interested in the foreign affairs of the United States. And of special importance, in his famous *Report* to Congress, of November 22, 1808, he rendered a detailed account of French seizures of American vessels between 1804 and 1808; and as a result of his connection with the *Report* it is quite likely that Jackson could not have found a more suitable person for membership on the Commission. It is entirely probable that Campbell was as well acquainted, in the year 1832, with foreign attacks on American owned ships between 1804 and 1812 as any person then living in the United States. President Jackson showed good judgment in selecting him as a member of the Board.

According to the congressional act establishing the Claims Commission, Campbell and his colleagues, John K. Kane of Pennsylvania and Thomas W. Williams of Mississippi, were to begin their duties in Washington on August 6, 1832. On that date, however, only Kane was present, Campbell and

⁶Miller, ed., *Treaties*, III, 641; *Register of Debates*, 22 Cong., 1 Sess. (1831-1832), 1201; 4 *Statutes at Large*, 574-576.

Williams not having reached Washington since receiving their letters of appointment. Nevertheless, Kane took his oath of office, and on the part of the Commission set up office in a room in the Department of State Building, in which the Board of Commissioners was to perform its work. On his own authority, Kane called the next meeting of the Board for September 17. On the latter date Campbell and Williams were present, and at that time were sworn into office.⁷

The next day the Commission drew up its formal plan of procedure. For the time being no chairman was to be selected and it was agreed that all questions brought before the Board for consideration should be decided by majority vote. In the presentation of memorials for claims, it was agreed that all persons having claims against France under the Rives treaty should file their memorials with the secretary of the Commission. Because such a long time had elapsed since the depredations had occurred on which claims were to be settled, it was decided that persons presenting claims should designate precisely for whom the claim was being preferred. Each memorial, the Commissioners decided, should also state whether the claimant had been a citizen of the United States at the time he first presented his claim. Every memorial was to be verified by an affidavit. Having established these essential procedures, the Commission adjourned until December 17. A notice was placed in the chief Washington newspaper, the *Daily National Intelligencer*, informing the public of the preliminary work done by the Commission, and requesting claimants to file their memorials properly and at an early date. The Board, it said, wished to get along with its work as soon as possible.⁸

⁷Official Journal, Claims Commission, August 6, September 17, 1832; G. W. Campbell, *Journal of the French Spoliation Claims Commission*, 1 (Library of Congress). See also Weymouth T. Jordan, ed., "George Washington Campbell's Journal of the French Spoliations Claims Commission, 1832-1835," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, XIX (1947), 98-109; and John H. Frederick, "John Kintzing Kane," in Johnson and Malone, eds., *Dictionary of American Biography*, X, 257-258.

⁸Washington *Daily National Intelligencer*, September 20, 1832; Official Journal, Claims Commission, September 18, 1832.

Pursuant to its adjournment the Board met again on December 17, 1832, and remained in session until March 5, 1833. From December 28 until March 3 it met every day, except holidays, and during that time received 721 memorials. Few decisions were rendered on the validity of the claims presented, however; and according to a rule adopted by the Commission, no money was to be awarded until the last session of the body, that is, until after all the memorials presented had been examined and passed on. It was also decided that if a memorial was drawn up and placed before the Board according to the Board's specifications it was to be accepted for examination; if not, the memorial was to be rejected. As it happened, a majority of the memorials presented to Campbell and his colleagues at this session did not conform to the rules laid down, and thus they were rejected outright. On March 5, 1833, the Commission had examined all memorials which had been received. It therefore adjourned until June 10, to await the presentation of additional claims. Before recessing, the Commissioners ordered that in the future all memorials should be filed before the date of the Commission's next meeting; the examination of petitions received during a sitting of the Board would be postponed, they said, until the following sitting. Memorialists were promised, however, that their claims would be examined at least within six months after being placed in the hands of the Commission.⁹

During the second session of the full Commission many very complicated questions of international law arose on which it was impossible to hand down a decision, the reason being that international law in regard to the questions to be settled had not been determined by any agency at the time the Board was created. The Board, therefore, had to render its own opinion of international law in some instances. The Rives treaty, itself, had stated, of course, that the 25,000,000 francs

⁹Official Journal, Claims Commission, December 17, 1832—March 9, 1833; Campbell Journal, Claims Commission; 10. See also the Report of the Board of Commissioners Organized under the Convention between the United States and France, for the Settlement of Claims, Concluded July 4, 1831 (Archives of the Department of State, Washington). Cited hereafter as Report of the Commission.

received from France should be distributed by the United States "in the manner and according to the rules which it shall determine." Realizing the complexity of some of the problems with which it was faced, in an effort to help reach a decision on many of the claims being presented, the Board urged claimants to engage a lawyer to draw up their petitions. In this connection, according to Campbell, "The Board having during this session suspended its decision, as to some memorials which have been filed, in order to allow itself time for considering more deliberately & maturely, the several difficult and important questions growing out of them, it was determined on the application of the memorials by their agents, that arguments would be received on such questions, provided the same were in writing; . . . and in the case of every memorial that should thereafter be received, in which the claimant intended to submit an argument, such argument should be filed with the Secretary, before or on the day, his memorial should be set down for examination."¹⁰

Shortly after the adjournment of the Commission on March 5, 1833, Williams resigned from the Commission, his place being taken by Romulus M. Saunders of North Carolina. Saunders was appointed on May 1, and arrived in Washington in time to sit in on the busiest session of the Board. During this session, which lasted from June 10 until July 13, 1833, a total of 1,314 memorials was received and examined.¹¹ With such an overwhelming number of persons attempting to benefit from the Rives treaty, most of their petitions, as might be expected, were rejected. Two types of claims in particular were turned down at this session of the Commission: those based on the questions of ransom and commission. Many claimants stated, for example, that since the French Government had forced them to pay large sums of money for the return of their captured vessels, which in their belief had been a form of ransom, they therefore deserved reimbursement. In rendering its decision on this problem,

¹⁰Campbell Journal, Claims Commission, 3.

¹¹Official Journal, Claims Commission, June 10—July 13, 1833.

however, the Board concluded that a captor, an agent of France in this case, could "legally sell the thing captured to the former owner for such a sum as may be agreed upon," when the country of the captor and that of the person whose property was captured were not in a state of war. The Board said that this was the correct decision because the American Government had at the time of the seizures forbidden its citizens to carry on trade with certain foreign countries, including France. Since the United States and France were not at war when the money was paid for the return of American vessels, the Board therefore had no legal power to grant an award on a claim for ransom. In effect, the Board reminded these claimants that they had broken the law when they traded with France, and that they were not under the protection of American law at the time. The decision on the other type of rejected claim, involving commissions, was less complicated: owners of a cargo "would seem bound," said the Board, "to pay him [the captain of a vessel] according to the contract, out of the sum allowed as indemnity for the cargo," but no commission was due the captain of a vessel who had delivered his cargo, if the carrier vessel had been captured on her return voyage to the United States.¹²

Two other varieties of claims which had earlier been rejected were now declared valid by the Commission. These types are mentioned in the following newspaper article published in Washington shortly after the Board recessed on July 13: "The Board have been, we understand, very laboriously engaged, having acted upon more than two thousand memorials [since its establishment]. It may be interesting to those who are at a distance, to know that those cases which have been suspended on the question of salvage, have been duly examined; and after mature deliberation, have been ordered to be received— . . . ; and likewise those cases which were suspended on the question of compromise, were ordered to be received—. . . ."¹³ The newspaper article also stated that

¹²Campbell Journal, Claims Commission, 5, 11.

¹³Washington *Daily National Intelligencer*, July 17, 1833; *Washington Globe*, July 16, 1833.

persons having claims should file their memorials before October 21, the date set for the next meeting of the Commission. In the future, the announcement concluded, the Board would hear claims three months after they were received. Claims had previously been heard within six months after receipt, but it was hoped that business could be expedited under the new plan of procedure, and thus allow the Commission to complete its work.¹⁴

The third business session of the Commission convened on October 21, 1833, and sat until February 19, 1834. Again memorials poured in, and the three Commissioners performed an enormous amount of tedious work. This session received 556 new memorials for examination. Also, 230 petitions, most of them claims for salvage and compromise, which had previously been rejected, were now re-examined and accepted as valid. In an effort to be as fair as possible, an undue amount of time was expended in investigating claims which seemed invalid, and over 200 such claims were thrown out.¹⁵ Furthermore, after much deliberation, the Board arrived at two new decisions during the session; and Campbell must have shown special interest in these two decisions.

First, the Board declared that all claims were invalid if the seizure presented as proof of the claim had occurred before the conclusion of the treaty with France of September 30, 1800.¹⁶ Writing of such claims, *Niles' National Register* several years later (February 6, 1841), explained the reason for this decision: "When the commissioners sat here some years ago, to distribute the fund received from France, these petitioners applied, among others, for indemnity out of that fund. But they were told, and properly told, that they could receive nothing, as their claims had been formally and solemnly relinquished and surrendered to France by our own

¹⁴*Ibid.*; Official Journal, Claims Commission, July 13, 1833.

¹⁵Official Journal, Claims Commission, October 21, 1833—February 19, 1834; Campbell Journal, Claims Commission, 4.

¹⁶Campbell Journal, Claims Commission, 17. See *House Executive Document*, No. 309, 50 Cong., 1 Sess. (1887-1888), for a complete list of American ships attacked by the French before July 1, 1801.

government, by the treaty of 1800. Other claimants, therefore, divided the whole fund among themselves, and these claimants got nothing.”¹⁷ The other decision, mentioned above, was that claims arising from seizures under the Berlin and Milan Decrees were valid, since neither of the Decrees could be accepted as legal by the United States Government. According to Campbell, and this decision must have brought him much pleasure in view of his earlier objections to both Decrees and Orders-in-Council, such acts as the Berlin and Milan Decrees, “made by a single nation, can be viewed only as municipal regulations, and binding only . . . on her own citizens or subjects.”¹⁸

When the Commission had examined all the memorials received, it adjourned again, this time until May 5. Once again notices were printed in the Washington newspapers that the Board had recessed. The request was repeated that all claimants send in their memorials as soon as possible. According to the public notice, however, no claim would be accepted for examination after May 5, 1834, except on urgent demand. The Board was bringing its work to a close. In order to hasten even further the completion of its activities, it would at its next meeting, it announced, examine all memorials within one month after they were received.¹⁹

Little business was accomplished during the session of the Commission from May 5 to June 26. The Board met every day, but on twenty-nine of those days adjourned for a lack of claims to examine. On a number of days only one or two memorials were presented, and during the entire session only 171 new claims were placed before the Commission. In addition, about 100 which had been presented earlier were re-examined and accepted as valid. On June 26, having no

¹⁷*Niles' National Register*, LIX (February 6, 1841), 357.

¹⁸Campbell Journal, Claims Commission, 19.

¹⁹*Washington Daily National Intelligencer*, February 25, 1834; *Washington Globe*, February 26, 1834. See also Official Journal, Claims Commission, February 19, 1834.

more petitions to consider, the Board recessed again, on this occasion until October 27.²⁰

Before adjourning, the Commission made its first report to the Senate, informing that body that since its first meeting it had recognized as valid 2,140 memorials, most of which claimed damages for ships or cargoes destroyed by the French after 1810. The total damages requested in these petitions, the Board stated, amounted to \$41,640,838.35, including \$24,574,920.99 in interest! Seventy-six memorials, most of which demanded settlements for claims arising before the year 1803, had been rejected outright, because the Rives treaty made no provision for payment of such claims. These early claims had been settled, as far as Campbell and his fellow-Commissioners were concerned, by the French treaty of September 30, 1800, and the Louisiana Cession treaty of April 30, 1803.²¹ The principal on these earlier claims amounted only to \$618,258.72, the interest to \$1,001,579.12! Five hundred and forty-eight memorials on damages sustained between 1803 and the announcement of the Berlin Decree in November, 1806, had also been suspended for further study. These claims came to \$8,573,493.96, of which \$5,301,168.02 was interest. Altogether, up to June 7, 1834, it was reported to the Senate, the Commission had looked over 2,764 memorials, involving both valid and suspended claims to the amount of \$50,214,332.31.²² The report was an amazing thing. It was obvious that few claimants, probably none, could receive the entire amounts which they were demanding. Only about \$10,000,000 had been promised to the United States for distribution by the Rives treaty.

²⁰*Ibid.*, May 5—June 26, 1834.

²¹As is generally known, the United States in 1803 paid \$15,000,000 to France for Louisiana, reserving \$3,750,000 of this sum to be paid to citizens to the United States who at the time held claims against France. See, for example, Carl Russell Fish, *The Development of American Nationality* (New York, 1929), 97.

²²See *Senate Document*, No. 417, 23 Cong., 1 Sess. (1833-1834), *passim*, for this report.

On October 27, 1834, the Commission began its longest and most difficult session. From that date it met every day, with few exceptions, until July 2, 1835. Although only 256 memorials were added to those on hand, the Commission was overwhelmed with work. Hundreds of petitions which had earlier been rejected or suspended were re-appraised, many of them now being declared valid under the new rules.²³ Also, during this session Campbell and his colleagues began drawing up rules which they planned to follow in determining the amount of money to be paid on each valid claim. According to Campbell, the Board members decided “. . . to regard the fund provided by the convention as assigned only to indemnify claimants for actual losses sustained—(which it is presumed, must have been the object of those who framed it)—which are to be ascertained according to the ‘principle of equity & justice’ as prescribed in the law under which they [the Commissioners] act; and not to pay for the loss of expected profits, which might never have been realized; and in pursuance of this view to consider the original cost of the property lost as the ground upon which to estimate the actual loss sustained.”²⁴

On January 31, 1835, the Board reached a decision on another matter from which numerous claims had arisen: the question of the legality of trade with Santo Domingo between the years 1806 and 1814. It was during this period that the various Decrees of Napoleon were in force and that the United States, itself, was trying to enforce its various embargoes and non-importation and non-intercourse acts. Campbell was positive that Americans had traded at their own risk. He had said so at the time, and he believed so now. And according to the Commission, any vessel which had engaged in trade with Santo Domingo during the period under question “are considered as having been engaged in an illicit trade & their cargo liable to capture & condemnation. . . .” This was precisely the sentiments of strong Jeffer-

²³Official Journal, Claims Commission, October 27, 1834—July 2, 1835.

²⁴Campbell Journal, Claims Commission, 9.

sonians during the years 1806 to 1814, including Campbell. The Commission rejected memorials demanding damages for ships captured and cargoes seized while conducting trade with Santo Domingo.²⁵

On October 5, 1835, the Commission began its last session,²⁶ during which was decided the amount of indemnity each petitioner who had a valid claim was to receive. Although a few new memorials were presented and considered during the session, much of the time of the Commissioners was occupied with the consideration of new arguments on claims which had earlier been suspended or rejected. On the basis of the various rules and interpretations already set up, however, most petitions were again rejected as invalid. On December 31, 1835, the Commission adjourned *sine die*, bringing its work to a close. According to an unofficial report of the Commission's accomplishments, the awards were "equivalent to about 53½ cents on each dollar awarded, without calculating the interest already due on the original indemnity agreed on, and which would increase the dividend about ten per cent. . . . Upwards of one million dollars were awarded on claims not allowed until within forty-eight hours of the expiration of the commission, and which before that period were considered as rejected claims."²⁷

During its existence the Commission performed the enormous task of adjudicating 3,148 claims involving 883 alleged illegal attacks on American shipping. The total claims of damages by the memorialists amounted to \$51,834,170.15. Obviously all of the claims could not be recognized, for the Board had less than \$10,000,000 to distribute. In its last session, the Board declared 1,567 petitions involving 361 spoliations as valid, and made them the basis of awards amounting to \$9,352,193.47.²⁸ The Board examined each peti-

²⁵*Ibid.*, 27, 32.

²⁶The last recess of the Board occurred between July 2 and October 5, 1835. *Official Journal*, Claims Commission, October 5, 1835.

²⁷*Niles' Weekly Register*, XLIV (January 9, 1836), 315-316.

²⁸*Official Journal*, Claims Commission, December 30, 1835; Report of the Commission.

tion placed before it, and brought to a close one phase of a controversy which had plagued American and French diplomats for more than thirty years. The controversy carried on between President Jackson and the French Government over France's reluctance in transferring the money provided for in the Rives treaty is quite another story, and one which had little bearing on the work of Campbell and the other Board members.²⁹ The Board's work is summarized in the following table:³⁰

REPORTS OF THE FRENCH SPOLIATION CLAIMS COMMISSION,
1832-1835

Session	Memorials Received	Spoliations
August 6, 1832		
September 17-18, 1832		
December 17, 1832-March 5, 1833	721	
June 10-July 13, 1833	1,314	
October 21, 1833-February 19, 1834	556	
May 5-June 26, 1834	171	
October 27, 1834-July 2, 1835	256	
October 5-December 31, 1835	130	
total	3,148	883

Report of June 7, 1834, to the Senate

Session	Memorials Received	Damages Requested
August 6, 1832-June 7, 1834	Valid 2,140	\$41,640,838.35
	Rejected 76	1,619,837.84
	Suspended 558	8,573,493.96
total	2,764	\$51,834,170.15

Awards

Session	Memorials Declared Valid	Spoliations Recognized	Amount Awarded
October 5-December 31, 1835	1,567	361	\$9,352,193.47

²⁹See McLemore, *Franco-American Diplomatic Relations, 1816-1836*.

³⁰Report of the Commission; *Senate Document*, No. 417, 23 Cong., 1 Sess. (1833-1834).

On December 31, 1835, the Commissioners submitted a report of their work to the Secretary of State, explaining in detail the rules they had followed in arriving at their decisions on the memorials placed before them:

The questions which arose in the progress of their examinations were numerous and many of them novel, complicated and difficult, . . . It was held that the relief provided for under the Convention could be awarded only to American Citizens, for injuries to American property, and where the right to indemnity had never been transferred to the subject of a foreign Government; that to constitute a valid claim, the owner of the property must have been entitled at the time of the spoliation to the protection and aid of the United States; that the Act complained of, was clearly authorized by France, or directly sanctioned by those acting under her authority, either judicial, civil or military; that it was plainly unlawful; in violation of the Law of Nations or of Treaty Stipulations between France and the United States; that the injury was not the loss of expected gains but substantial and susceptible of pecuniary indemnity and that the claim remained unimpaired, and in full force against France at the date of the Convention of 1831—such was the general character of the reclamations which have been recognized by the Board and which constitute the basis of their awards. To establish them, the claimant was uniformly required to produce the higher evidence which was accessible to him; the record of condemnation where any existed, certified in legal form and when that did not exist or could not be had, some original document exhibiting the facts and circumstances and whose authenticity admitted no doubt. Where the original records had been mislaid, or destroyed or the claimants efforts to produce copies of them had failed or where from the nature of the act it was not susceptible of verification by records, secondary evidence was admitted with the greatest caution . . .³¹

Shortly after the Commission made its lengthy and necessarily detailed Report, Campbell left Washington for his home in Nashville.³² In serving on the Commission, his last public office, he showed his ability to work diligently at a difficult and a rather thankless task. The Official Journal of the Claims Commission does not indicate the part taken by each member in the deliberations, but it is known that Campbell was the most conscientious member. This fact is shown throughout the Journal. Only on rare occasions was he absent from the meetings, and when he was not present the other two members usually refrained from conducting

³¹Report of the Commission.

³²Campbell to Jackson, February 21, 1836, in Campbell Papers (in possession of Mrs. Susan M. Brown).

business. This was especially true during the last session of the Commission. On the other hand, whenever Campbell was present with one of his colleagues, business was carried on. Throughout the Official Journal Campbell's signature always appears first when the members of the Commission approved the minutes of the day's work.³³ Of course this may have resulted from respect for his age, for at the time the Commission was organized he had reached the age of sixty-three years. During those years, however, he had had a most eventful and useful public career and many experiences. He, because of his long service as a member of Congress and as a cabinet officer and a diplomat, more than any other member of the Board was well qualified for the tasks faced by the Commission. If a chairman of the Commission was selected he was probably the member who served in that capacity. However that may be, he brought an eventful public career to a close in the year 1835. At that time he returned to his private life, which was also interesting and productive.

Campbell's public career was indeed a full one: congressman, judge, senator, cabinet member, diplomat, and spoliations claims commissioner. Except for short intervals, he held some office of public importance from 1803 to 1820 and again for three years during the 1830's. He was a follower of Jefferson and of Jackson and was a staunch supporter of these two presidents as well as Madison and Monroe. He never gained much public acclaim in the sense of a Clay, Calhoun, or Jackson. Rather, he was a loyal and active member of the upper echelons of the Jefferson party, which he served quite consistently. Few of his contemporaries held as many important offices as the "sterling Republican" from Tennessee. And in each of his positions, except the one as secretary of the treasury, he performed his duties in a manner that was satisfactory to the leaders of his party. That this was indeed the case is shown by the fact that he was honored by Presidents

³³Official Journal, Claims Commission.

Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and Jackson. Historians have, perhaps, found Campbell wanting, but the same can not be said truthfully about the top leaders of his political party and about his contemporary Tennesseans during the early nineteenth century. When Campbell completed his work as a member of French Spoliations Claims Commission he also brought to a close a very productive public career.

Chapter IX

PRIVATE LIFE

Because of his activities and successes in promoting the interests of the West, Campbell became one of the most important early spokesmen of his region. Of significance, also, was his personal interest in the social advance of his section and state, which he demonstrated repeatedly both by his consistent support of legislation which he believed would be beneficial to Tennessee and by his activities as a private citizen. Publicly and privately, his interests were typical of many leaders in the Old Southwest who moved westward as the frontier advanced. His own rise to political importance and to a first-rate social position was accomplished, first, by acquiring a reputation as an excellent lawyer; second, by proving himself an efficient office-holder; and third, by amassing a personal fortune which, according to tradition and several extant sources of information, was unequalled in Tennessee at the time of his death in 1848.¹

After graduating, in 1784, from the College of New Jersey, Campbell continued his interests in education and cultural pursuits. While living in Knoxville he became a trustee of the East Tennessee College, located in that city, and after moving to Nashville in 1810 he was named to the same position in connection with the University of Nashville.² Throughout his life he was particularly interested in history, geography, art, and music. He also spoke and read French.³ Whether he was one of the Nashville intellectuals who induced various stock companies to begin making their short stands in the city during the 1820's is not known, but

¹Davidson County, Tennessee, Will Book, 1846-1851, pp. 209-213 (Office of the County Clerk, Davidson County Court House, Nashville, Tennessee).

²*Wilson's Knoxville Gazette*, August 17, 1808; *Nashville City and Business Directory, 1860-1861* (Nashville, 1861), 16. Putnam, *History of Middle Tennessee*, 639-652, presents the early history, to the year 1813, of the University of Nashville.

³*Campbell Diary, passim*. Mrs. Susan M. Brown of Spring Hill, Tennessee, has in her possession a number of books on history, geography, and art which were owned by Campbell.

it is very probable that he was and that he attended the performances when they came to town. His wife, the former Harriet Stoddert, came from a prominent and highly cultured Maryland family; and if he had no taste for the stage and music before his marriage in 1812, he probably acquired such tastes through his wife's influence. He must have been present at some of the musical entertainments in Washington from 1803 to 1818. While serving as minister of the United States to Russia he regularly attended stage performances in St. Petersburg. While in England, where he stopped on his return trip to the United States from Russia, he went to the opera every night.⁴ After his retirement from public life in 1820, he continued as one of the leading citizens of Nashville and took an active role in the social life of the town. During this, the latter part of his life, he also showed much interest in horse-racing and cock-fighting, as was the case with many other men of the wealthier class.⁵

From his arrival in Tennessee until his death in 1848, Campbell carried on one of the most lucrative law practices in the state. From 1798 until 1803 he practiced almost continuously. In the years 1803-1822, however, he neglected his profession because of the pressure of public duties, although he did occasionally take a case.⁶ In January, 1822, shortly after his return to Nashville from Russia, he reopened a law office, notifying the public with the following advertisement: "The undersigned having determined to resume the practice of LAW, will attend the Courts of the United States, the Supreme Court of Errors and Appeals of this State, held in Nashville, where he resides; and also the latter

⁴For excellent accounts of social life in Nashville and in Tennessee during the pre-Civil War period, see F. Garvin Davenport, "Culture Versus Frontier in Tennessee, 1825-1850," *Journal of Southern History*, V (February, 1939), 18-33, and his *Cultural Life in Nashville on the Eve of the Civil War* (Chapel Hill, 1941). Campbell's Diary is the best source available concerning his interests in art, music, drama, literature, museums, and the like.

⁵Nashville *Democratic Clarion and Tennessee Gazette*, March 15, 1811; *National Banner and Nashville Whig*, June 21, 1826.

⁶Nashville *Impartial Review*, June 6, 1807; Campbell to LeRoy de Chaumont, February 7, 1812, in Harriet Turner Deposit.

court held in Columbia. G. W. Campbell.”⁷ In this notice Campbell intimated that he would practice only in the higher courts of the state. Very likely this meant that because of his earlier reputation as a lawyer, as well as his success in national politics and as a diplomat in Russia, he expected his time to be fully occupied with major cases. Presumably he was busy with his practice. No detailed study has been attempted of his later activities as a lawyer, but it is known that he practiced law from 1822 until his death, and that at his death he was considered one of the leading lawyers in Tennessee.⁸

After his retirement from public life, Campbell took a very active part in Nashville civic affairs, and was present at many gatherings of local importance. For example, on November 21, 1821, he officiated as president of a public dinner given in Nashville in honor of General Andrew Jackson. During the dinner he gave the following toast: “*The true policy of nations; few wars, free trade, and a pure and prompt administration of justice.*”⁹ If he happened to be hinting at his availability for some political position, he was doomed to disappointment. Tennessee now had a figure who overshadowed all others: Jackson. Again, on April 16, 1825, Jackson was feted by about one hundred persons from Middle Tennessee, and once more Campbell acted as president of the affair. This dinner was probably the first public gathering attended by Jackson in Nashville after his defeat for the presidency in 1824, and Campbell extended himself with a toast to the General’s famous victory at New Orleans: “The 8th of January 1815—Distinguished in the annals of fame, as that day on which the American Eagle took his boldest flight, while the Sons of Liberty, guided by the Hero

⁷Nashville *Whig*, January 23, 1822.

⁸Campbell Brown to Anson Nelson, February 22, 1882, in Tennessee Historical Society Collection; *National Banner and Nashville Whig*, January 13, 1826; Nashville *Daily Union*, February 18, 1848.

⁹Nashville *Whig*, November 24, 1821. Joseph H. Parks, ed., “Letters from Aaron V. Brown to Alfred O. P. Nicholson, 1844-1850,” *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, III (June, 1944), 174, refers to Campbell’s reputation in Tennessee after his return from Russia.

of the West, triumphed over the champions of Tyranny."¹⁰ In the presidential campaign of 1828, Campbell was an active supporter of Jackson as a member of a committee of eighteen, headed by John Overton, which prepared and distributed circulars and newspaper articles in Jackson's behalf.¹¹

That Campbell continued to be considered as a civic leader is indicated by a request that he preside at a Fourth of July celebration in 1831 at the Vauxhall Hotel, a favorite gathering place for the people of Nashville. This time his toast was a particularly interesting one, indicating a very noticeable change in attitude in the interval since his service in the national House of Representatives in 1803-1809. His toast was: "*Agriculture, Commerce and Manufacturing—*Hand maids in the forward march of our national prosperity, let them receive equal encouragement from the public authorities, but no hot-heads at the public expense to force the premature growth of either."¹² These were different words indeed for a man who had once been so out-spoken in seeking special legislation for agriculturists of the West, although not different from his sentiments as a Senator in 1816-1818. In October, 1841, Campbell again presided at a public dinner in Nashville. This time the affair was in honor of James K. Polk, who had just been defeated in the Tennessee gubernatorial campaign by James C. ("Slim Jimmy") Jones, the Whig candidate, a "flea-picking" and joke-telling demagogue of the first order.¹³

But presiding at public gatherings was only a minor activity with Campbell. In the same month that he resumed

¹⁰Nashville *Whig*, April 23, 1825.

¹¹See Gabriel L. Lowe, Jr., "John H. Eaton, Jackson's Campaign Manager," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XI (June, 1952), 99-147. See also Arda S. Walker, "Andrew Jackson: Frontier Democrat," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, XVIII (1946), 71.

¹²Nashville *Republican & State Gazette*, July 5, 1831.

¹³See Powell Moore, "James K. Polk and Tennessee Politics, 1839-1841," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, IX (1937), 31-53; Ray Gregg Osborne, "Political Career of James Chamberlain Jones, 1840-1857," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, VII (September, December, 1948), 195-228, 322-334; and Williams, *Beginnings of West Tennessee*, 271-279.

his law practice in Nashville, Governor Joseph McMinn appointed him as first vice-president of the Bank of the State of Tennessee, which had been established to provide relief from the economic distress brought on in Tennessee by the Panic of 1819. Campbell was associated with the bank, whose headquarters were in Nashville, until 1831, when the institution went out of business.¹⁴ He was also an active promoter in a movement to persuade Nicholas Biddle, president of the Second Bank of the United States, to establish a branch of the federal institution in Nashville. On January 22, 1827, a petition signed by more than two hundred Nashville citizens was forwarded by Governor William Carroll to Biddle asking for a branch. At the top of the list was the signature of Campbell, former strict constructionist of the Jefferson era and a close personal friend of President Andrew Jackson.¹⁵ Six months later the branch was set up as requested; and in July, 1831, Campbell became one of its directors. He continued as an active director of the branch until the summer of 1832, when he left Nashville for Washington, D. C., to begin his duties as a member of the French Spoliations Claims Commission.¹⁶

A few months before becoming a director of the Nashville branch of the United States Bank, Campbell wrote to Jackson concerning the President's proposals to abolish the institution. Although Campbell had always been a member of the Jeffersonian and Democratic parties, he was now a supporter of the bank despite Jackson's insistence that it be abandoned:

In regard to the suggestions in the message [Jackson's message of December 6, 1830, to Congress] on the subject of a national Bank, or an institution to manage Treasury concerns, I

¹⁴A branch was also established in Knoxville. Joseph H. Parks, "Felix Grundy and the Depression of 1819 in Tennessee," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, X (1938), 19-43.

¹⁵*Senate Reports*, 23 Cong., 2 Sess. (1834-1835), I, 225-243.

¹⁶*Nashville Whig*, January 9, 1822, July 4, 1843; *Nashville Republican & State Gazette*, July 7, 1831; *National Banner & Nashville Daily Advertiser*, February 4, 1833. See also Claude A. Campbell, "Branch Banking in Tennessee Prior to the Civil War," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, XI (1939), 34-46.

would take the liberty to remark, that the plan proposed as a substitute for the present United States Bank is a new one, not hitherto much investigated by the public; and whose merits it would be difficult to estimate without knowing the details. I would, however, venture to suggest to your consideration whether the measure ought to be pressed at the present in the face of the coming presidential election.

I was not, myself, originally an advocate for the United States Bank—; and entertain strong doubts of its original constitutionality. But one having been so long sanctioned by the public opinion of the nation, under the administration of the Republican, as well as federal [Federalist] party, I brought myself to vote for the present one, having become convinced, by some experience, while serving as Secretary of the Treasury that the pecuniary concerns of the nation could not be successfully managed without the aid of an institution, whose operations could be co-extensive with the limits of the union; and over which the general government had some control. I feel assured, Sir, you will consider these observations, as they are intended, as merely suggesting the views I entertain, after some reflection, on the subject, and submitted, from the best motives, for your own eye & consideration alone . . .¹⁷

This letter is an important document in the study of Campbell's career, but it does not mean that he was breaking with the Jackson political party over the question of the bank. Campbell had become quite wealthy and was living in the city which was to become the stronghold of the Whig party in Tennessee,¹⁸ but he allowed neither his wealth nor his support of the bank to influence his close, life-long connection with the Democratic (earlier with the Jeffersonian) party. While serving as Secretary of the Treasury during the War of 1812, he saw, and suffered politically from, the straits the United States Government fell into during the years between the dissolution of the First United States Bank and the establishment of the Second. It was for this reason, and because of the political dangers involved for Jackson, that he wanted the President to cease attacking the Bank. Jackson paid no attention to Campbell, and went ahead to kill the Bank and win re-election to the Presidency in 1832.

It is of interest, too, that Jackson accepted Campbell's letter in the spirit in which it was written: an expression of

¹⁷Campbell to Jackson, January 14, 1831, in Jackson Papers.

¹⁸Official election returns in Tennessee in 1840, 1841, 1843, 1844, 1845, 1847, 1848, and 1849, respectively, may be found in Nashville *Whig*, November 30, 1840, October 11, 1841, October 12, 1843, November 23, 1844, October 18, 1845, Nashville *Daily Union*, October 11, 1847, Nashville *Whig*, November 25, 1848, and Nashville *Daily Union*, October 12, 1849.

a personal opinion on a very controversial question. That the President did not allow the difference of opinion on the subject to affect his friendship for Campbell is indicated by his appointment of Campbell to the French Spoliations Claims Commission little more than a year later. It seems, however, that while Campbell was in Washington, from 1832 to 1835, serving on the Commission, he came around to Jackson's point of view on the bank question. Whether or not this is so, a few years later, when President Martin Van Buren publicized his sub-treasury plan, Campbell was one of its most outspoken advocates in Tennessee.¹⁹ This may not be conclusive evidence, but it does indicate a change in opinion. And Campbell was active in banking in still one more way. In January, 1840, he was appointed a director of the main bank of the Bank of Tennessee, located in Nashville. This bank was established in 1838, and Campbell served on its board until January, 1842, when he was removed by J. C. Jones, the recently elected Whig governor of the state.²⁰ For the remainder of his life he took no active part, except as an investor, in the affairs of the banks of Nashville.

A very important phase of Campbell's life was his activities as a land speculator and land owner. When he went from North Carolina to Tennessee he was part of an extensive exodus from the seaboard states to the frontier. After living in Knoxville for about thirteen years, he participated in another significant westward movement, this time from East to Middle Tennessee, and it is rather certain that after he gained his land holdings in the central section of the state he wished to establish his residence nearby in order to look after his holdings. He possessed the usual insatiable desire for land which was always prevalent in a frontier region, and which was especially manifested in Tennessee during its

¹⁹Campbell to Van Buren, December 25, 1837, in Martin Van Buren Papers (Library of Congress).

²⁰Nashville *Republican Sentinel*, January 28, 1840; Nashville *Republican Banner*, January 31, 1842. See Claude A. Campbell, "Banking and Finance in Tennessee during the Depression of 1837," East Tennessee Historical Society's *Publications*, IX (1937), 19-30, for information on the banking situation in Tennessee during this period.

early stages of development. It was part of Campbell's nature to strive for wealth, as well as for political office, and since land was the chief form of wealth in Tennessee, as well as in the entire West, during the greater part of his life, his desire for land is easily understood.²¹ In obtaining possession of his holdings he followed the common methods of his time: he bought numerous certificates for land which had been granted by the state of North Carolina to persons in return for military service in the American Revolution and in Indian wars; he received land grants and pieces of property as payment for legal services rendered to his clients; and, in some cases, he made outright purchases, usually of land adjacent to that which he already owned. His rise from a position of very moderate means to a position of wealth is associated very definitely with his land operations. At the same time, he must have received large sums from his law practice through the years; and it is possible that he gained some wealth through his marriage. But his land dealings were most important; and he was a self-made man of substance.

While living in North Carolina he owned no land in his home county,²² and presumably no where else. As far as can be ascertained, his activities as a land owner began in April, 1799, when one of his clients deeded him a small lot in Knoxville in payment for legal advice. From this beginning he developed into one of the largest private landowners in Tennessee. By September, 1800, he owned the entire block in which his original lot in Knoxville was located, and for the various lots paid a total price of \$240. On February 2, 1803, he concluded the purchase of his first extensive tract of land in Tennessee, paying \$100 for half interest in a 5,000 tract located near Knoxville, beginning at the mouth of Turkey Creek, extending up the Clinch River to Hickory Creek,

²¹Abernethy, *From Frontier to Plantation in Tennessee*, is based almost entirely upon a discussion of the importance of land in the development of Tennessee from 1763 to 1861.

²²Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, Records, 1796-1799 (Office of the County Clerk, Mecklenburg County Court House, Charlotte, North Carolina).

from the latter point to the Tennessee River, down that stream to a point parallel with the mouth of Turkey Creek, and back to the beginning point.²³ And it was with this piece of land that he began his activities as a land speculator. For the next six years, however, he spent most of his time in Congress, and, as he put it, his "landed interests suffered" during this period.²⁴ By the summer of 1808 he sold only 173 acres of his original purchase of 2,500 acres. Therefore, in August, 1808, he gave the power of attorney to Patrick Campbell, the person from whom he had made his purchase, in the hope that sales would speed up. In the next four years, two of which G. W. Campbell spent as a member of the Tennessee Supreme Court of Errors and Appeals, the entire tract between the Tennessee and Clinch Rivers, except 131½ acres, was sold. In all, 18 sales were made, and by April 11, 1812, a profit of \$2,416, minus meager taxes, was realized on an original investment of \$100.²⁵

In June, 1807, Campbell obtained his first piece of land in Middle Tennessee, purchasing a North Carolina military warrant which entitled him to 300 acres on the southern bank of the Cumberland River, near Carthage, in Smith County.²⁶ From this date until his death, all of his land transactions, except those by which he sold off his East Tennessee holdings, were confined to land located in the central and western parts of the state. He transferred his activities from East to Middle and West Tennessee for a very definite reason, namely, the temporary settlement by the United States Congress in 1806 of a dispute between Tennessee, North Carolina, and the United States which had been going on for many years over the ownership of certain lands located in Tennessee. The dispute had one of its beginnings in 1783

²³Knox County, Tennessee, Records, I, Book G, 54, 141; Book N, 352 (Office of the County Clerk, Knox County Court House, Knoxville). See also *ibid.*, Book L, 61, 62.

²⁴Campbell to Joseph Anderson, April 22, 1815, in Miscellaneous Correspondence, Received, 1800-1852, in Secretary of the Treasury Files.

²⁵Knox County, Records, Books G, I, L, N, O, Q.

²⁶Jenkins Whiteside to Campbell, December 21, 1807, in Campbell Papers (Library of Congress).

when North Carolina established a so-called Military Reservation in what is now Middle Tennessee. At that time most of the territory which became the state of Tennessee was part of North Carolina. Persons who held North Carolina military warrants given for service in the American Revolution were allowed to take up land within the Reservation. In 1789, when North Carolina became a state, it ceded outright its transmontane lands to the federal government, with the understanding that military warrants could continue to be satisfied within the Military District.²⁷ In 1796, Tennessee was admitted as a state, and from that date until the congressional act of 1806, a three cornered dispute between the federal government, North Carolina, and Tennessee raged over the ownership and control of land in the state.

As provided by the settlement of 1806, certain rights of each of the three disputants were recognized. First, the right of holders of North Carolina military warrants to take up land in the Military Reservation was acknowledged; second, the Congressional Reservation, consisting of what is at present West Tennessee and the southwestern section of Middle Tennessee, was set aside for use by the federal government; and third, Tennessee was given authority to satisfy North Carolina claims. In addition, and of special importance in the immediate speculation in land and the settlement of Middle Tennessee which resulted, this so-called Compact of 1806 also provided, in keeping with the North Carolina Cession Act of 1789, that in case all military grants could not be satisfied within the original Military Reservation, land could be taken up elsewhere in the state outside of the Congressional Reservation established by the Compact. Specifically provided, however, was the condition that warrants could not be satisfied in that section of southeastern Tennessee which had been set aside for use by the Cherokee Indians in 1783 when the Military Reservation was established. Finally, the Compact of 1806 also permitted individ-

²⁷Saunders and Clark, eds., *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, XXIV, 482-485, XXV, 4-6; *American State Papers, Public Lands*, I, 108-110.

uals to obtain land titles through the ownership of warrants which had been issued by the North Carolina government.²⁸

In conjunction with this Compact of 1806, the question of Indian claims to land in Middle Tennessee was also partially settled, thereby encouraging speculators and settlers to become active in the region. In 1805, the Cherokee relinquished their claims to north central Tennessee; in 1806, to south central Tennessee. The stipulation was made, however, that no entries were to be made in the south central region until the year 1808. And, as was to be expected and as was customary in such cases of Indian cessions, speculators and holders of claims rushed into the area during the first six months of 1808.²⁹ Among those who became active was Campbell, although he was not a speculator on a large scale. He realized that here was an opportunity to gain possession of some good land, and like so many others he was not averse to taking advantage of the situation. Later events also indicate that at this time he was probably interested in setting up a plantation in Middle Tennessee. Since much of the newly opened land was available to persons who possessed military warrants, he purchased as many of them as he could afford.

On April 22, 1808, Campbell bought a warrant for 1,280 acres in Maury County, on the "North Side of Duck River." Two weeks later he obtained two more warrants: one for 730 acres, located in Williamson County, "on the South Side of Elk River;" the other for 1,000 acres, "lying in Williamson County . . . on McCulloch's Creek, a branch of Elk River." In August, he secured another warrant for 274 acres in the Elk River region. During 1809 two more warrants were bought, one in June for 640 acres "on the west fork of Mulberry Creek, a north branch of Elk River," and about two months later one which gave him 4741½ acres, "lying in

²⁸Abernethy, *From Frontier to Plantation in Tennessee*, 182-193.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 185, 188; Folmsbee, *Sectionalism and Internal Improvements in Tennessee, 1796-1845*, pp. 20-23; Cotterill, *The Southern Indians*. For maps showing the establishment of counties in Middle Tennessee from 1806 to 1816, see Holt, *Economic and Social Beginnings of Tennessee*, 156.

Rutherford and Bedford counties . . . on the waters of the westfork of Stones' river."³⁰ Having made these purchases, Campbell turned to a practice which was common among land speculators, big and little, during his period: he advertised his newly acquired land for sale or lease, in order to raise more money to buy more grants. On November 12, 1809, he ran the following advertisement in the leading Nashville newspaper:

The undersigned would lease in small tracts, for a term of years proportioned to the quantity of acres that each lessee engage to clear and put under good fence, 5,000 acres of land of the first quality, abounding with fine springs, lying on both sides of richland creek of Elk river, including the mouth of Robertson's creek—also other tracts of first rate land, well watered, lying on Norris' creek and Mulberry creek of Elk river—one tract on the west fork of Stone's River—and one on Duck river, with several other tracts, all well watered, and land of good quality—for terms apply to Capt. John Coffee, near Jefferson—to Vance Greer Esq. in Bedford County, who will give leases, etc., or to the undersigned, who will be at Nashville for some time, and who will also sell several of the above described tracts on good terms. G. W. Campbell.³¹

He had little success in selling or renting his lands, but on January 4, 1810, he bought still another military warrant for an additional 640 acres adjoining his tract on Norris' Creek in Bedford County.³²

In January, 1810, Campbell moved from Knoxville to Nashville, and shortly afterward began buying up lots in Nashville, on which he later constructed a mansion. On March 30, 1810, John Overton, one of the wealthiest men in Middle Tennessee, gave him an option to one-third of two lots on Cedar Knob, where the present capitol of Tennessee is located. The sale was conducted in July, and for the property Campbell paid Overton the sum of \$400.³³ At the same time Campbell also obtained parts of two other lots on the

³⁰Tennessee Land Grants, September 4, 1807—March 3, 1846, Book A, 258, 259, 274, 437; *ibid.*, May 2, 1809—January 29, 1810, Book B, 244, 577 (Tennessee Land Office and Archives, Nashville).

³¹Nashville *Democratic Clarion and Tennessee Gazette*, January 19, 1810.

³²Tennessee Land Grants, January 29, 1810—January 1, 1811, Book C, 551.

³³Davidson County, Tennessee, Register, July 26, 1810—February 25, 1813, I, 3 (Office of the County Clerk, Davidson County Court House, Nashville). Cited hereafter as Davidson County Records. The option that Overton gave to Campbell is in the possession of Mrs. Susan M. Brown, Spring Hill, Tennessee.

Knob from Roger B. Sappington, a Nashville merchant, paying \$400 for them also. For the price of \$7,000 Campbell purchased three more lots on the Knob in December, 1812. All of these lots were located between Gay and Cedar streets.³⁴ There is a local tradition in Nashville that the price once paid for the Knob property on which the capitol is located consisted of a gun and a cow, but if such a deal were made, Campbell was not involved in it.

The advertisement which Campbell published in November, 1809, resulted in few sales, for on October 13, 1810, he again advertised nearly all of the same tracts for sale or rent.³⁵ Shortly thereafter, he entered into a new enterprise: the establishment of a plantation on his land in the Elk River region. He did not plan, however, to live on the place, but wished to find some responsible person to act as his manager. He failed to locate a suitable person; therefore, during the summer of 1811 he decided on another plan, that is, to form a partnership with someone who could aid in improving his holdings. In December, 1811, he wrote an old friend, Major P. H. Porter, of Knoxville, outlining his plans:

I have intended for some time to engage some person to carry on business for me on the plan I shall herein propose, or some other plan similar to it— . . . I own several valuable tracts of land of good quality on the waters of Elk river—and particularly one tract of 5,000 acres on Richland creek of Elk river [in Giles County]—first rate land & well watered—heavy cane land & hills & grassy range in its neighborhood—a number of persons have taken tracts upon it, but I have reserved a very fine, large favourite Spring, in a healthy situation, at which I propose to have a settlement made & a farm opened on a tolerably extensive scale—To have from ten to 20 hands according to circumstances employed therein, first opening & then cultivating a farm—raising such crops besides grain—probably cotton—hemp & tobacco as might suit the market—In the meantime to have such a stock of **horses, cattle, hogs**, etc kept on the place, & raised as might be found most convenient & profitable—To which might be added—a distillery—as I have engaged a person to erect a grist mill, within a little more than a mile from the place, down the same creek—which is fin-

³⁴Davidson County Records, I, 4, 380-381.

³⁵Nashville *Democratic Clarion* and *Tennessee Gazette*, October 26, 1810; *Wilson's Knoxville Gazette*, November 17, 1810.

ished & grinding before this time—That the surpluses of such farm should be sold at the best market.³⁶

This letter is interesting for several reasons. By 1811, Middle Tennessee was becoming a grain producing area. With the production of grain crops as the main objective on his farm, Campbell planned later to extend his activities to the production of other money crops. His primary interest, since he was to be an absentee owner, was profits. He showed no interest in directing the actual work himself, but wished that to be done by his partner. Farming activities were secondary to his other activities. He owned a few slaves, but hoped that Porter would furnish additional ones in return for the partnership being offered to him.³⁷ Porter, said Campbell, was to act as superintendent of the plantation, and if he thought it necessary was to engage an overseer as an assistant. The two partners were to divide all profits from sales of their farm produce in proportion to the investment each made in the undertaking. Concluding his letter, Campbell wrote, "Should the plan meet with your approbation & be likely to succeed, my intention is to purchase such a number of hands in addition to those I now have [the number is unknown] as might be deemed advisable, so soon as property can be disposed of for that purpose—I might require your aid & attention to effect this also—I had supposed that during the ensuing summer or fall the business might be commenced—this would however, depend on circumstances, but the sooner the better. . . ." ³⁸

Although it is not known whether Porter accepted Campbell's plan for the establishment of the plantation in Giles County, it is known that by the summer of 1814 the property there increased in value to about \$25,000, and this may mean that the plan was carried out. In 1844, moreover, when Campbell drew up his will, he described the plantation in

³⁶Campbell to Porter, December 11, 1811, in Harriet Turner Deposit.

³⁷*Ibid.* See *Wilson's Knoxville Gazette*, July 28, 1810, for an advertisement of a slave who ran away from Campbell. The slave, Harry, was a "tall, slim made fellow."

³⁸Campbell to Porter, December 11, 1811, in Harriet Turner Deposit.

some detail, and from that description it is believed that most of his plan materialized.³⁹ Furthermore, an advertisement which he published in June, 1817, for the sale of certain tracts of his land may also be taken as a probable indication that he was satisfied with the progress being made on his Giles County place. The advertisement did not mention his plantation: "The undersigned will sell 860 acres in Bedford County, on the headwaters of Sinking and Sugar creeks, about 6 or 7 miles from Shelbyville—well watered, and a considerable part of which is first rate land—1280 acres adjoining Gordon's ferry, tract on Duck River—300 acres on Robinson's creek, Lincoln county—also 474½ acres in Rutherford county, on the west fork of Stone's river—. . . G. W. Campbell."⁴⁰ It is known, then, that Campbell operated a plantation, and also that he owned about twenty slaves during his lifetime.⁴¹ But there is no evidence available to show that he was ever primarily interested or engaged in agriculture. When he bought land he usually did so for speculative purposes. Another matter of interest is that his correspondence and papers at no point show that he ever took an active part, privately or publicly, in the controversy over slavery which raged during his lifetime.

When Campbell left the United States in 1818 to go to Russia, he placed his Giles County plantation under the direction of Alexander Esselman, whose brother, John N. Esselman, had married Campbell's sister Ann.⁴² The extent to which his business interests had grown by this date is partially reflected in the power of attorney which he granted to John McIver, a lawyer of Fairfax County, Virginia: McIver, according to Campbell's instructions was ". . . to transact and

³⁹Campbell to ?, July 2, 1814, in Campbell Papers (Library of Congress); Davidson County, Will Book, 1846-1851, pp. 209-213.

⁴⁰Nashville *Clarion and Tennessee Gazette*, July 15, 1817. On September 8, 1817, Campbell also bought 640 acres in Humphreys County. Tennessee Land Grants, September 4, 1807—March 3, 1848, Book N, 350.

⁴¹See, for example, Campbell Diary, July 7, 1820, and Davidson County Records, Book T, 79; III, 185; IV, 460; VI, 45, 160; VII, 432; VIII, 109.

⁴²Family Bible of the L. M. Brown Family; Nashville *Whig*, December 25, 1822.

conduct my business in the Nashville Bank and in the Branch Bank of the State of Tennessee at Nashville and to rent or lease out from year to year or for a longer term, my Houses, Lots and Land in and near Nashville and to hire or caused to be hired and taken care of, my slaves left there. . . . ”⁴³ Presumably his business affairs were handled satisfactorily while he was in Russia, for on his return to Nashville he began buying more land in Middle and West Tennessee in the old Congressional Reservation, which had been opened up to settlement by the act of Congress, on March 26, 1818, to holders of North Carolina military warrants which were still unsatisfied.

Campbell, himself, while serving in the Senate from 1815 to 1818, was largely responsible for pushing to passage the congressional measure under which he now made a number of purchases. Only conjectures can be made as to the amount of land he might have bought if he had been in Tennessee just after the Reservation was opened. If he had put through the bill for personal benefits he would have rushed into the newly opened region like other speculators. As it was, he left the country shortly after the bill was passed, and his next purchases of land in western Tennessee were made on June 22, 1822.⁴⁴ There seems little likelihood, therefore, that in pushing through Congress his bill he followed the more common practice of certain legislators of his period when they sponsored land legislation for personal gain.

Campbell's land bill, as it happens, was drawn up on the demand of the people of Tennessee, particularly Middle Tennesseans who wished to gain access to the region between the Tennessee and Mississippi Rivers. In taking advantage of the provisions of the bill after its passage, Campbell was no better and no worse than hundreds of others who did the same thing. It should be reiterated that he always had a reputation for personal honesty. For example, a letter he

⁴³Davidson County Records, Book H, 340-341.

⁴⁴Tennessee Land Grants, Book T, 620; Nashville *Clarion and Tennessee Gazette*, May 5, 26, 1818.

wrote to General Jackson about one year after the passage of his land bill of 1818 is of some interest in this respect. The subject referred to in the letter is unknown, but even so the letter is worthy of special note: "I felt confident, Sir," Campbell stated to Jackson, "you would not mistake my motive in declining to engage at a stipulated price as agent to procure the passage of a law, on which it might become my duty to vote—and certainly I did not misconceive yours [a letter of Jackson's] in applying to me on the subject.—I trust we shall be disposed to duly appreciate the motives of each other; notwithstanding there may be shades of differences in the opinions we entertain on the same subject—. . . ." ⁴⁵ It is regrettable that no more is known about this suggestive letter.

During the 1820's Campbell bought several large tracts of land in Middle and West Tennessee. In June, 1822, he obtained two grants issued by the West Tennessee Land Commissioners, who had charge of issuing grants in the regions in which he was interested. One grant gave him possession of 1,240 acres "in Stewart County on the Waters of the north fork of Forked Deer river;" by the other grant he gained 640 acres, on each side of Lost Creek, in Perry County. In July he bought another military warrant for 2,500 acres, "lying . . . in Stewart County on the north side of Obion river on Richland creek. . . ." Three months later he obtained 40 acres near the first tract purchased in Perry County. ⁴⁶ After making these various purchases, he once again fell back on the practice of offering his newly acquired lands for sale, and in December, 1822, offered to sell all his land, except his Giles County plantation, on what he described as "accommodating Terms." ⁴⁷ No records are available of any sales which he made, but somehow he acquired funds to buy additional land. By the year 1829 he also owned large tracts in Henry,

⁴⁵Campbell to Jackson, February 18, 1819, in Campbell Papers (in possession of Mrs. Susan M. Brown).

⁴⁶Tennessee Land Grants, Book T, 471, 620, 823; Book U, 341.

⁴⁷Nashville *Whig*, December 25, 1822.

Gibson, Weakley, and Shelby Counties.⁴⁸ Possession of his various tracts made him one of the largest land owners in the state.

Campbell's personal financial interests were by no means confined to the purchase and sale of land, however. As early as February, 1815, he was the owner of 48 shares of stock at \$100 each of a bank operating in Nashville.⁴⁹ Shortly after his marriage he subscribed to 20 shares in the Washington Fontine Company, a bridge construction company whose headquarters were in the capital city. In the same period he also bought a few shares in another Washington enterprise, the Anacostia Bridge Company.⁵⁰ In the late 1830's he bought stock in Nashville's two leading hotels, the Washington and the City.⁵¹ During the latter part of his life he became interested in a number of turnpike companies operating out of Nashville, and obtained large stock holdings in several of them. His largest purchase of turnpike stock was made in October, 1837, when he acquired 432 shares at \$25 each in the Franklin Turnpike Company. It is not known whether he showed any interest in investing in Tennessee railroad stock.⁵²

On December 11, 1843, Campbell concluded what was very probably the most profitable single sale of land during

⁴⁸*National Banner & Nashville Whig*, September 29, 1829.

⁴⁹Thomas Corry to Campbell, February 4, 1815, in Campbell Papers (Library of Congress).

⁵⁰Campbell to Robert P. Dunlop, May 31, 1825, in Robert P. Dunlop Papers (Library of Congress).

⁵¹The following interesting letter, written by the editor of the *Knoxville Post*, appeared in the *Nashville Whig*, October 26, 1843: "Speaking of the Hotels, I must not omit to mention, for the especial benefit of persons coming to Nashville, that the City Hotel, is one of the best, if not the very best public house in the Western country. It is a large and commodious building, situated on the Square, . . . and immediately in the center of business. . . . The rear of the building commands a fine view of the Cumberland, which flows almost beneath it. Every delicacy that an abundant market affords, graces the table, and all the reasonable wants of the guests are anticipated and amply applied for."

⁵²A receipt for Campbell's purchase of the stock in the Franklin Turnpike Company is in possession of Mrs. Susan M. Brown. For a discussion of the turnpike era in Tennessee, see Stanley J. Folmsbee, "The Turnpike Phase of Tennessee's Internal Improvement System of 1836-1838," *Journal of Southern History*, III (November, 1937), 453-477.

his life, namely, the sale to the city of Nashville of the plot of ground earlier known as Cedar Knob on which his home was located. By the year 1820, he controlled nearly all the lots on the Knob, which by that date was known as "Campbell's Hill." A mansion, one of the show places of the town, had been built on the "Hill," and Campbell's residence was there in 1843 when he sold four of his lots to Nashville.⁵³ The city of Nashville had just been selected as the state's capital, and was especially anxious at the time to obtain possession of a suitable location for a new capitol building, and in choosing a site the city officials preferred Campbell's. Civic leaders were anxious to present a desirable site to the state of Tennessee on which a capitol could be constructed, and made such a promise to the General Assembly when Nashville was selected as the permanent capital in 1843.⁵⁴ "Campbell's Hill" was considered such an ideal spot for the building that the city of Nashville paid its owner \$30,000, in three annual installments of \$10,000 each, for four lots. The lots were "Bounded on the North by an alley on the East by High Street on the South by Cedar Street and on the West by Vine Street . . . containing by estimation four acres more or less. . . ." ⁵⁵

On May 11, 1844, Campbell, being at the time seventy-five years of age, drew up his will. And the document shows without doubt that his financial interests were widely scat-

⁵³Nashville *Whig*, September 26, 1820; Davidson County Records, VI, 622.

⁵⁴The original capital of Tennessee was Knoxville; in 1812 it was moved to Nashville, where it remained until 1817, when it was returned to Knoxville; from 1819 until 1825 it was at Murfreesboro; it was returned to Nashville in 1825, and Nashville was selected as the permanent capital in 1843. Abernethy, *From Frontier to Plantation in Tennessee*, 226.

⁵⁵The number of the lots were 108, 109, 120, and 121. Campbell bought lots 108, 109, and 121 on December 8, 1812, paying \$7,000 for them. The record of his purchase of lot 120 has not been located. Davidson County Records, I, 3, 4, 380, 381; VI, 622. In payment of the "Hill," Campbell received the personal check of the mayor of Nashville, William Nicol. Nell Savage Mahoney, "William Strickland and the Building of Tennessee's Capitol, 1845-1954," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, IV (June, 1945), 102. See also J. W. Denis, "The Nashville Cemetery," in *ibid.*, II (March, 1943), 35. The three annual payments to Campbell were made as agreed upon. Davidson County, Will Book, 1846-1851, pp. 265-267.

tered, and that he indeed was a wealthy man. He had started construction of a new home after selling his old place on the "Hill." When completed the new place was to be the property of his wife as long as she lived. His wife also was to receive the following: \$10,800 worth of stock in the Franklin Turnpike Company; \$1,250 in stock in the Franklin and Columbia Turnpike Company; \$500 in the Nashville and Charlotte Turnpike Company; and \$11,003 in stock in the City Hotel Company. Dividends from these stocks, the will stated, were to be used by his widow to keep his family "in a manner suitable to their situation & standing in society." Mrs. Campbell was also to have charge of the "slaves at the mansion, coachman & footman and other servants." At her death whatever goods she still possessed was to be divided equally between her two children.⁵⁶

To his only living son, George, Campbell willed the following: his plantation in Giles County, consisting of 5,000 acres, and all the slaves, horses, mules, cattle, hogs, sheep, and farming implements on the place, thus indicating that Campbell's plan of 1811 to have a "farm opened on a tolerably extensive scale" had materialized. At his mother's death George was to receive the Nashville "mansion;" 2,500 acres of land in Obion County, valued at \$20,000; a tract of 1,851 acres in Haywood County, valued at \$5,000; one lot on Vine Street, Nashville, worth \$2,500; and five acres of land, near Nashville, on the Nashville and Charlotte Turnpike, valued at \$1,500.

To his daughter, Lyzinka, the widow of a former Nashvillian, James P. Brown, Campbell left a tract of 3,000 acres in Maury and Williamson Counties, near the present town of Spring Hill, valued at \$40,000;⁵⁷ a farm of 144 acres in Maury County, worth \$2,000; another tract of 1,841 acres in

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 209-213, contains Campbell's will. It will be remembered that three of Campbell's children died in Russia. A fourth child was born in Russia; two more were born later. Only George and Lyzinka were alive in 1844, however. Family Bible of the L. M. Brown Family.

⁵⁷Part of this tract is still in the possession of the Brown family of Spring Hill, Tennessee.

Dyer County, near Dyersburg, estimated at \$5,000; and two lots in Nashville, one on Gay Street and the other on College Street, valued at a total of \$2,000. A gift of 640 acres in Lincoln County, estimated at \$10,000, which Campbell had made to his daughter before her marriage, and 193 acres presented to her after her marriage, were confirmed by the will. Finally, Campbell also conferred a gift of a slave named Tilla to his sister, Ann Esselman. His sister was also to receive 60 acres of land near the Giles County plantation, and until her death was to be provided by the estate with an annual sum of \$200.

On February 17, 1848, Campbell died at the advanced age of seventy-nine; and two days later, the following announcement of his death, which includes a brief summary of his public career, was published in the *Tri-Weekly Nashville Union*:

Judge Campbell emigrated to this State, from North Carolina, at an early day, and was soon called into public service, in which he contributed much to that share of influence which Tennessee has ever since maintained in the councils of the Union. He has occupied seats in each House of Congress, was chairman of the most important committees in the House during Mr. Jefferson's administration, and was chairman of the committee on Military Affairs in the Senate when war was declared. He was also Secretary of the Treasury under Mr. Madison, and was afterwards appointed Minister to Russia by Mr. Monroe. He was a patriot who secured the confidence of the country—laborious in his investigations—accurate in his information—steadfast in opinion—upright in purpose—successful in his pursuits, kind and benevolent to all and generous to the needy. He has left a bereaved family—with a wide circle of friends, and none with cause of enmity.

What manner of man was Campbell? Physically, his carriage was erect and his stature impressive, and he presented a commanding personality. He always aspired to improve himself, and he had a long distance to climb from the backwoods of North Carolina. Through his many contacts with polite society in Tennessee, in Washington and in Europe (and in this connection his wife must have been of great aid), he transformed the usual roughness of a frontier boy into the habits of a polished gentleman. In his later life he was considered one of the best informed men in Tennessee. After his return from Russia in 1820, he acquired wide acres

throughout Middle and West Tennessee, slaves, a beautiful home in Nashville, and his economic position was secure. Few people ever got more out of their physical frame. Campbell enjoyed a full life. He participated in two westward movements of importance, from western North Carolina to East Tennessee and from the latter region to Middle Tennessee. In private life he rose from the obscure position of a typical frontier boy to that of first-rate importance in the state of his adoption.

Using the law profession as a stepping-stone, he entered public life. He had the habit of close study, and through his ability as a speaker he was able to express his ideas and convictions with great force. In Tennessee political history, he should be classed with William Blount, John Sevier, Felix Grundy, Andrew Jackson, James K. Polk, Andrew Johnson, and John Bell as the leading politicians in the years before the Civil War. As a reward for his long support, as well as for his qualifications and application, the Jeffersonian party maintained him in important political positions for nearly two decades. He was a friend of every President from Jefferson through Polk, with the exception of John Quincy Adams. Campbell acquired an outstanding reputation in public life and was one of the very first Westerners to rise above an ordinary position in national politics. Throughout his life he made valuable contributions in the development of legislative, executive, financial, and diplomatic policies of the federal government. He was one of the most active and prominent Western participants in national politics during the first decade of the nineteenth century. Next to Henry Clay he was perhaps the best-known practicing politician of the West in national affairs during the entire Jeffersonian period. Indeed, as Secretary of the Treasury, there were only three positions higher in the political scale than he reached: Secretary of State, Vice-president, and President. Clay was the first Westerner (as Secretary of State in 1825) to attain a higher national political position than Campbell. Thus, during the period from 1792, when Kentucky became the first state west of the mountains, until 1825, when Clay

began his service in John Quincy Adam's cabinet, unless Clay's earlier tenure as Speaker of the House is considered, Campbell had the distinction of rising to the highest political position of all men in the New West. Campbell was unquestionably an important, although surely not the most important, early spokesman and officeholder of his region. He does not deserve the obscurity that has been his lot.

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A large portion of the subject matter of this study has been combed from manuscripts collections on deposit in Washington, D. C. Particularly useful have been the following materials in the Library of Congress: the G. W. Campbell Journal of the French Spoliations Claims Commission, George Washington Campbell Papers, and Harriet Turner Deposit. Other valuable manuscripts are the William Plumer Autobiography, 1795-1844, and the Papers of Robert P. Dunlop, Andrew Jackson, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, James H. Nicholson, and Martin Van Buren.

Valuable information was also found in the Archives of the Department of State: Journal of the Claims Commission under the Convention between the United States and France, Concluded July 4, 1831; Report of the Board of Commissioners Organized under the Convention between the United States and France, for the Settlement of Claims, Concluded July 4, 1831; Russia, George Washington Campbell, July 21, 1818—September 12, 1820; and the United States Ministers, Instructions, VIII.

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1848, Register, 1810-1813, and Will Book, 1848-1851, Davidson County, Tennessee, in the County Court House, Nashville.

A particularly valuable collection of original manuscripts presumably used only by the present author, belongs to Mrs. Susan M. Brown, of Spring Hill, Tennessee. The collection includes the Family Bible of the L. M. Brown Family; George Washington Campbell Papers; and G. W. Campbell Diary during My Ministry to Russia, July 3, 1818—October 31, 1820. The present study could not have been written without the use of these materials.

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The following newspapers, on deposit in the Library of Congress, the Nashville Public Library, and the Lawson McGhee Library of Knoxville, have supplied much material in the study of Campbell and have perhaps added something to an understanding of his times; unless indicated otherwise the newspapers were published in Nashville: *Clarion & Tennessee Gazette* (1817-1818); *Daily Union* (1848); *Democratic Clarion and Tennessee Gazette* (1810-1814); *Impartial Review* (1806-1808); *National Banner and Literary, Political, and Commercial Gazette* (1826); *Republican and State Gazette* (1830-1831); *Republican Banner* (1842, 1848); *Tennessee Gazette* (1801-1803) *Tennessee Gazette and Mero-District Advertiser* (1803-1805); *Union* (1841); *Whig* (1815, 1819-1822, 1825-1826, 1843); *Whig & Tennessee Advertiser* (1818-1819); *National Banner and Nashville Daily Advertiser* (1833); *National Banner and Nashville Whig* (1826, 1829-1830); *Niles' Weekly Register* (Baltimore, 1811-1850); *Tri-Weekly Nashville Union* (1848); *Washington Daily National Intelligencer* (1832-1835); *Washington Globe* (1833-1835); and *Wilson's Knoxville Gazette* (1808-1812).

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Secondary Materials

The period in which Campbell lived is one of the most written about periods in American history. To list all the books, monographs, biographies and special studies examined in connection with this study would not be an endless affair, but it would be misleading to say the least. Numerous materials have been used solely for what might be termed background material; and only the more significant of these types are listed hereinafter. It is worthy of note, too, that Campbell was not mentioned in many of the books and other publications that have been examined. Some items have been more pertinent to Campbell and his period than others. It is these items that are cited here.

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